A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET III

Dream Warriors

by

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First Draft
6/16/86

A

SCREEN BLACK.

CAMERA PANS DOWN -- until a white dome RISES INTO FRAME.

A woman's pregnant belly. Next moment a tiny, fetal hand tipped with nascent steel claws jabs up out of the belly and rips down -- splitting the woman asunder.

We HEAR the ungodly SHRIEK -- and SEE the infant Freddie -- glistening and dripping blood and placental goo -- rear up INTO FRAME -- glaring directly INTO CAMERA with blazing eyes and fierce teeth -- and we --

ZOOM BACK WITH GREAT SPEED -- THROUGH THE ROOM -- OUT A WINDOW --

EXTERIOR -- ZOOM CONTINUING -- REVEALING AS IT PULLS BACK --

A SMALL RANCH-STYLE HOUSE. Alone in dark woods.

CAMERA PULLS UP LIKE A ROCKET, REVEALING THE PLANET --

THEN WE PLUNGE TO BLACK with a terrific SHRIEK OF MUSIC

BEGIN MAIN TITLES as we FADE UP ON --

MONTAGE --

Various large cities -- and a series of Child Missing posters, discarded milk cartons, grocery bags -- all featuring photo reproductions of missing children -- all teen agers. The last girl, a pretty redhead, we will see again moments later.

DISSOLVE FROM THIS PICTURE TO --

EXT. TWO-LANE BLACKTOP -- DAY

The ground gives off shimmering waves of heat. An AUTOMOBILE ENTERS FRAME.

INT. AUTOMOBILE -- DAY

NANCY THOMPSON listens to the radio as she drives. She's the Nancy we remember, but a little older now, more of an adult, a woman.

RADIO
Between 1960 and 1980, the suicide rate among 15 to 19 year-olds

RADIO (CONTD)
increased by 136%, with 20% who failed at the initial attempt later completing the act. Why are our children killing themselves and what can we do about it? Join us on Talk-Radio ---

She turns the station to Rock.

EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD -- DAY

A TEEN-AGE GIRL with long red hair stands roadside, her hair blowing, her thumb out listlessly. It's the same girl we saw on the last of the missing-child posters. She is barefoot, dirty. Nancy's car ENTERS FRAME and stops. Nancy reaches over, opens the door. The Hitcher gets in and they pull away.

INT. NANCY'S CAR -- DAY

Nancy's glad to have company on this baked, desolate stretch of road.

NANCY
You must be really hot. How can you stand on that asphalt without shoes?
(the Hitcher says nothing)
What's your name?
(again, nothing)
Where you going?

HITCHER
Down.

NANCY
Down where?

HITCHER
Down where he fucks you.

We HEAR the EXPLOSION of a tire; the car lurches.

EXT. ROAD -- DAY

The car swerves off the gravel shoulder into a field.

After a beat, Nancy gets out, inspects the tire.

CLOSER ANGLE.

It's shredded.

NANCY
Shit. I thought that was a good tire. And me without a spare...

She straightens and looks around, cocking her head.

NANCY
You hear kids singing?

The Hitcher rolls her window up from the inside and locks the door. Nancy looks back to her, a little uneasy now.

NANCY (CONTD)
Look, uh, I'm gonna go see if there's a house over there. I'll be right back.
(as she goes)
There's water in the back seat.

THE FIELD

As Nancy walks, we HEAR CHILDREN'S VOICES singing, and as she draws closer, we recognize the tune to a familiar nursery rhyme -- though we still can't make out the words.

NANCY.

She emerges from a clearing, stopping. Disturbed with what she sees.

NANCY'S POV.

BOYS and GIRLS, jumping rope in front of a ramshackle ranch-style house. (We recognize the house from our opening scene of the nightmare birth). The Boys jumping rope in front of it are dressed in suits, the Girls in party-dresses. They don't see Nancy; and she's transfixed.

CHILDREN
One, two, Freddy's coming for you,
Three, four, better lock your door,
Five, six, grab your crucifix ---

Then they <u>are</u> suddenly aware of her presence, and scatter as she moves towards them, vanishing into the darkness of the trees.

NANCY

Approaches the house. The yellow lawn is littered with abandoned tricycles. There's a wrecked car half-sunk in the unraked drive, and what looks like a dead possum belly up and fly-blown farther back by a sagging out building.

Nancy's on the porch now. We HEAR a lonely WIND-CHIME.

CLOSE UP. WIND CHIME.

A conventional mobile-like wind-chime -- excpet that the "chimes" are long razors.

CLOSE UP. NANCY.

She reacts.

CLOSE UP. WIND-CHIME.

The chimes are now normal.

NANCY.

She ENTERS the house.

INT. HOUSE -- DAY.

The house is completely empty. Even when new this place could never have been more than spare and cold. Now it's a few rooms of blown leaves, broken windows and flaking paint. Nancy hears a momentary metallic WHIRR back in one of the back rooms. Then it stops.

NANCY
Hullo?

She slowly makes her way in the half-darkness, back into

A BACK CORRIDOR --

She sees what looks like a doorway. But then sees... it's an elevator.

As if she can't help herself, she goes to it, and then moves her finger through space until it presses its button -- and the doors immediately open.

The word DOWN lights up beneath the button. She ENTERS.

THE ELEVATOR.

She tilts her head to look at the numbers above the door.

EXTREME CLOSE UP.

The "floor" numbers begin at one then jump 25 and 50 at a time until they read "250", "275," "300," "400," "1,000," "2,000," "5,000," etc.

NANCY

She makes a sudden movement to get out of the elevator; too late. The doors slam shut and the car begins its descent.

The elevator shakes as if gaining tremendous velocity. Nancy begins to panic. From the position of Nancy's body inside the elevator, we see that not only is the car dropping with incredible speed, but it is also at times moving SIDEWAYS in its shaft through the earth, like a roller coaster car.

THE FLOOR.

It begins to slide open from beneath Nancy's feet. Hot air gusts her from below. She SCREAMS.

ANGLE ON RAZOR-GLOVED HAND.

It comes from the hellish pit of the shaft and feels around the receding floor as if looking for a clawhold. Nancy SCREAMS as she tries to kick it off, stepping on it with her heel. The floor continues to recede, but the car begins to "right" itself so that by the time it finally comes to a stop, the empty space where the floor was is now the elevator's ceiling. The razored hand has disappeared. Nancy bolts the car.

DARKNESS. A CORRIDOR.

A GIANT TRICYCLE wheels its way toward her, riderless. It stops in front of her.

VOICE

Nancy?

Out of the darkness steps JOHN, Nancy's father. He's wearing his policeman's uniform and is much as we remember him -- except that his hair has started to grey.

NANCY
(incredulous)

Daddy?

She runs to him, hugs him, crying.

NANCY (CONTD)
Why did you leave me? I've been looking for you so long --

JOHN
I found him, baby. Five years! And I burned him again. He was born in this house. And now he's burning!

He turns to the wall. We see a steel handcuff bolted into cement; through it is a burned hand, flesh off the bone, twitching. Nancy walks to it; the arm of the hand disappears around the corner. The father sees this and reacts in surprise.

JOHN
Wait a minute... Where's the rest of him gotten to?

B

EXTERIOR. FIELD. THE CAR. DAY

The Hitcher in the car is drinking from a bottle of Evian water, watching out the side window. Wary.

LOOKING PAST AND BEHIND HER -- THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD --

We SEE what at first looks like some quick-moving python -- and then can be seen to be Freddie's hand and long, long arm, snaking up in a graceful arc over the hood, rearing back -- then snapping forward with striking force --

With a sudden explosion of tempered glass the windshield blows out, and as the startled girl snaps around and opens her mouth to scream, the razored hand shoves itself straight into her mouth.

Like a hand controlling a puppet, it lifts her, first up, then back and out of the car with great ease, right through its shattered windshield!

EXT. CAR -- DAY

The hand with its long, snakelike arm drags the girl towards a nearby tree. No part of Freddie's arm ever touches ground -- but

it methodically dangles the girl so that her feet do, making tracks right to the tree.

AT THE TREE --

As Freddie's snake/arm lifts the girl up into the dark leaves, like a python taking its victim up to its bower. To swallow at leisure...

INT. CORRIDOR -- DAY

Nancy and her Father race along a corridor, following the arm. Then the thing goes right through a barred window into darkness. They can't follow. John stops, clutching his chest.

JOHN
(gasping)
He's so sly. You can't close your eyes. If you close your eyes ...he gets away...
(laughs)
But I'm going to take care of that.

With one hand, he pulls the skin of his eye lid away from his face. The skin is elastic, the lid comes out three or four inches. He holds the index finger of his other hand up; it has a razor on it. He brings it down, slicing off the lid. Nancy SCREAMS.

INT. CAR -- NIGHT

Nancy is still SCREAMING -- alone in the front seat of her car. She's awakened by a powerful flashlight flooding her in light. She panics and bolts from the car -- but is caught in the arms of A MAN WITH FLASHLIGHT. She fights, yelling and scratching -- the Man lets go, jumping back.

Nancy jerks away, stumbles and falls.

VOICE
Jesus, it's okay! I'm not gonna hurt you!

Half up and ready to run, Nancy turns back, calmed by the voice.

NEIL GUINESS -- a good-looking man in his late twenties, peers back at her, the most open, non-threatening sort of person you

could ever want to meet in a dark field in the middle of the night.

NEIL
You okay?

Nancy stands up, a bit shakily, and brushes off her skirt.

NANCY
Sorry. Must've fallen asleep at the wheel.

NEIL
You hit your head?

NANCY
I don't think so.

NEIL
Let's take a look.

He sits her back down in the frontseat, takes a penlight out and looks in her eyes.

NANCY
What are you doing?

NEIL
Just want to see your eyes. It's okay, I'm a doctor.

NANCY
Oh. That's handy.

She goes for a bottle of pills in her purse. He takes them away.

NEIL
No pills. Not with a possible concussion.
(looking in her eyes again)
They look pretty good.

NANCY
What'd you say your name was?

NEIL
Neil Guiness. Aside from a bump on the head, I'd say you're lucky.

NEIL (CONTD)
Where were you going?

NANCY
Last thing I remember I was looking for a motel. And there was a hitcher.
(touches her head)
Or was that a dream too...

She looks around. No sign of anybody else.

NEIL
Well, I think the hitcher moved on. As for the motel, I don't think you're going to make it. Your axle's broken.

Nancy checks out the wheel -- it's pushed up into the car.

NANCY
Oh God, my poor car...

Neil shoves his hands in his pockets and thinks.

NEIL
Look, I live just a few miles from here. You can stay in the guest room. That's not a line, by the way. Anyway, it would be better -- in case you get nausea or a headache. That can happen with a bump on the head.

Nancy looks him over more carefully. The more she looks, the more she trusts him.

NANCY
What about my car?

NEIL
We can get it in the morning. On my way back to the hospital.

NANCY
(smiles)
You're not one of those serial killers, are you?

He's already walking back towards his car.

NEIL
I was gonna ask you the same thing.
Come on.

She starts off after him, sniffing the damp night air.

NANCY
God, what's that awful smell?

NEIL
There's blood on the car --
(waits for her to catch up -- walks next to her)
That's why I was so worried. You must've hit an animal.

EXT. NEIL'S HOUSE -- NIGHT.

A white wooden house surrounded by orchards.

INT. NEIL'S HOUSE, BREAKFAST ROOM -- NIGHT

Neil refills Nancy's coffee. The house is warm and homey.

NANCY
It wasn't like my father to disappear. He was a cop and all -- very "hard-ass." and by-the book.

NEIL
So you just took after him.

NANCY
Followed him through five states. Each place he was, the people's descriptions of him changed. First he was just some tough-looking cop. Then he was just a guy needing a shave. Then he was a drunk who got in a fight. Then he just disappeared.

NEIL
Just drifting.

NANCY
(shakes her head)
Not drifting. Looking. He was looking for something. A place. A house. I never could figure out what it was.

NEIL
Your mother must be awfully worried. First him going, then you -- you keep in touch?

Nancy runs her finger around the rim of her cup.

NANCY
She's dead.
(lower)
Died in her sleep.

NEIL
Sorry.

She looks up, not succumbing to mood.

NANCY
So what are you, a surgeon?

NEIL
Psychiatrist.

NANCY
(laughs)
Perfect. Some more coffee, please?

NEIL
(pours her more)
You drink a lot of coffee.

NANCY
Habit I got into...when I was in high school.

She drinks deeply, and settles back in her chair, avoiding his eyes, scanning the room. Books, paintings, a split-bamboo fishing pole hanging on the wall.

NANCY (CONTD)
(casual)
So, can you interpret dreams? I mean, if I told you a dream, could you tell me what it meant?

NEIL
Sure. At a hundred dollars an hour, I can even dream for you.

NANCY
You charge that much?

NEIL
Well -- not yet. But when I go into private practice --

NANCY
You know, that's a good idea.

NEIL
What?

NANCY
Paying someone to have your dreams.

C

EXT. NEIL'S HOUSE -- LATER THAT NIGHT.

Wind gusts the dark rows of trees. A WIND CHIME is blown so fiercely it has no time to make a sound.

INT. NEIL'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Neil lays atop his bed, unable to sleep. Staring at the ceiling, still dressed except for his shoes. He swings his long legs over the edge of the bed and runs his hands through his hair.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL -- NIGHT

Neil goes into the bathroom and has a drink of water. Pads back out into the hallway. Stops. Looks down the hall.

HE CAN SEE -- the LIGHT from the guest room, the door open a crack.

INT. GUEST ROOM -- NIGHT

Neil ENTERS with a light knock. Nancy has fallen asleep with the light on. Or is that the way she sleeps?

He goes to shut off the light and notices a bottle of prescription pills on the nightstand. He picks them up.

CU -- THE PILLS

The lable reads: HYPNOCYL 60 mg. 1-2 tabs FOR SLEEP.

BACK TO NEAL.

He sets them down, and looks at Nancy sleeping. She's beautiful in sleep.

He looks away, turns off the light and EXITS.

INT. NEIL'S DEN -- NIGHT

NEIL searches through a thick reference book.

INSERT. THE PAGE.

His finger underscores HYPNOCYL on the page:

> The FDA has classfied the indications for this experimental drug...
> EFFECTIVE: for the managment of the manifestations of psychotic disorders.
> POSSIBLY EFFECTIVE: for sedation where dreamless sleep is considered optimal; suppression of night terrors.

BACK TO NEAL.

Thoughtfully, he closes the book and looks upward towards Nancy's room.

INT. GUEST ROOM -- NIGHT.

Nancy sleeps. The window is open; a light wind billows the curtains. Next moment the Hitcher FLOATS through the window into the room, her head covered with her hands and arms.

She stops in mid-air above Nancy's bed. Nancy awakens.

HITCHER
(plaintive)
He tore my hair off. My beautiful red hair...

The Hitcher slowly removes her hands from her head. The red hair and bloody scalp slides off her head and flops onto Nancy's covers right over her chest.

NANCY
Oh, Jesus...

Nancy is frozen in shock.

CLOSER ON THE HAIR -- as it begins to move like a red, wet creature from some hellish seabottom. It moves up to her neck and begins to choke her. Nancy gasps for air, trying to pull it off. She can't budge it from her throat. And meanwhile the Hitcher descends closer, tipping down at the head until her face is so close Nancy can feel her chill.

HITCHER
(mocking)
You must be really hot! How could you stand on that asphalt without shoes?

NANCY
Get away from meeee!

REVERSE TO THE DOOR -- as Neil enters, wondering at the voices in the night. He reacts in shock.

REVERSE -- NEIL'S POV --

Nancy wrestles on the bed with an invisible tormentor. There is no Hitcher, no throttling hair. She turns and sees him -- her face contorted with very real terror.

NANCY
Neil! Neil! Help me!

Neil crosses with a quick shamble, jumps onto the bed -- and slaps her across the face, stunning her. Then he sidles backwards, straddling her legs, moving back to her feet --

And Nancy watches in horror as Neil's lower jaw dislocates and drops slowly toward the bedclothes, his skin stretching grotesquely, like taffy.

Neil fastens his gaping mouth on Nancy's feet -- like an anaconda, and slowly begins to envelope her legs, her hips, devouring her whole.

Nancy screams helplessly as Neil/the snake bumps up against her chin, and we see that his face has transformed to that of Freddie. With only her head left to devour, he looks at her and laughs --

FREDDIE
Now give Freddie a little head, hmm?

Nancy jams her fingers into his face -- clawing and SCREAMING at the same time.

NANCY
God damn you!

REVERSE TO THE DOOR ONCE MORE -- as NEIL -- the real Neil -- ENTERS.

He rushes to the screaming Nancy and finally manages to waken her from her nightmare-within-a-nightmare.

NEIL
Easy, Nancy, easy. It's going to be all right. Easy.

The girl draws away from him, wide-eyed and distrustful, backing up against the headboard. She instinctively reaches for her pills. Then she throws them down, shaking her head in realization.

NANCY
They don't work anymore. The pills don't fucking work!

She goes to bury her face in her hands, then jerks away from her own fingers. Looking more closely at them.

CLOSER -- ON HER FINGERS AND NAILS.

Shreds of some awful, charred something hang from them.

If Neil didn't know better, he'd almost swear it was flesh.

She wipes her hands off furiously on the bedcovers. Then sinks into his arms.

As he holds her, we DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE COUNTRYSIDE -- MORNING.

A gorgeous panorama of rural isolation. A ribbon of road. Neil's car.

INT. NEIL'S CAR -- DAY.

Neil and Nancy ride silent a moment, Nancy nursing a cup of coffee steaming in one of Neil's mugs. Then:

NEIL
Nancy... who prescribed those pills for you?

NANCY
A doctor at a clinic. Back when I lived on Elm Street.

NEIL
Why?

NANCY
So I wouldn't dream. I haven't dreamed in five years. Until last night.
(looks out window)
Till I came here...

Neil slows and looks off.

NEIL
Your car...

EXT. FIELD -- DAY

The SHRIEKING OF BIRDS.

At first they don't notice this as they pull over to the field Nancy swerved into the night before. The tracks left by Nancy's car are still there. But they end at nothing. The car is gone.

NANCY
Dammit!

Neil looks around, looking for a logical explanation.

NEIL
Farmer probably had it towed, is all.
(sees her look)
I'll drop you in town. It's probably waiting at a gas station right now.

Nancy is studying a nearby tree, a huge, spreading oak. There's a flapping, shifting cloud of black up there. A whole rookery of hungry demand... She looks away from the crows, uneasy.

NANCY
It stinks like rotten eggs around

NANCY (CONTD)
here.

Neil has taken an ever-so-slightly more professional air; he's concerned about her.

NEIL
Maybe you should come with me. To the hospital, I mean. I mean, I gotta get to work anyway. We'll call there about your car. Okay?

Nancy turns and walks back to the car.

AT THE CAR -- as they get in.

NANCY
You think there's an Elm Street in this town?

NEIL
I wouldn't be surprised. Every town has one, don't they?

She gets in and closes the door. Looking back.

They pull back onto the road. As they do CAMERA TILTS UP to the tree once more. The crows have grown even more in numbers, the black wings flapping in from all directions. The SHRIEKING of the birds reaching crescendo.

EXTREME CLOSE UP. THE BIRDS.

They are picking at something at the top of the tree, frenzied. We can't see what it is, but it's big and dark and... messy. And the shrieks of the crows are deafening, roaring, electronic.

EXT. HOSPITAL -- DAY.

The sprawling, low-slung facade.

INT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCEWAY -- DAY

No sooner do Neil and Nancy enter than Neil is acousted by a darting NURSE --

NURSE
Doctor Guiness -- we've got another one.

Neil follows her, half running, Nancy trailing after.

NEIL
She have a name?

NURSE
Jane Doe. Fourth one this month.

NEIL
How'd she do it? Drugs?

NURSE
Knife. Or maybe a razor.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM -- DAY

Neil rushes in and joins several other DOCTORS, including a tall, no-nonsense woman -- DOCTOR SHIRLEY MADDALENA, MD, PHD -- his immediate superior at the institution. The girl they're all working over, KIRSTEN, is young -- no more than 16 -- and is stunningly beautiful. She also is fighting like a tigress, trying her best to twist away -- to push them off -- her eyes glazed, her mouth contorted in fear or disgust.

Two ORDERLIES (MAX, a big black guy one of them) literally pin her to the table so the doctors can fight to save her -- for her wrists are a mass of blood.

Neil reacts.

NEIL
Jesus -- I know this kid --
(leaning down to her)
Kirsten? It's Doctor Guiness.
What happened?

Kirsten twists away, knocking the big 200 pound black man back as if he was nothing -- jamming herself up into a corner -- jars and instruments clatter to the floor. And somewhere she's found a pair of really nasty-looking scissors -- and she holds them in front of her like a trench knife, ready to skewer the first person who comes near her.

The room falls into stunned silence. The girl looks from Neil to someone else, behind him. To Nancy, who's watching from the doorway. And then the girl starts rocking, and singing to herself.

KIRSTEN
Seven, eight, better stay up late,
Nine, ten, never.... never...

She can't find the words in her chaotic mind, and rocks, slashing them all back when they try to reach her. Shaking and moaning, getting worse by the second. Then --

NANCY
Never sleep again.

Instantly Kirsten stops. Her eyes swing round, then clear. Kirsten drops the scissors. Sags against the wall. A single big tear rolling down her cheek. The doctors rush in.

NANCY (CONTD)
(as if coming out of a trance, to Kirsten)
Who taught you that rhyme?

The girl doesn't answer. Nor does Kirsten make any effort to resist the doctors. It's as if the hands and wrists now being stitched belong to someone else. Her eyes are locked on Nancy's. Neil looks at Nancy too, confused by this girl with strange gifts.

D

INT. SPECIAL YOUTH WARD (THE UNIT) -- DAY.

CLOSE ON A SQUARE HATCH OF STEEL AND RIVETS. It slams open, revealing the faces of Nancy and Neil.

MAX, the big black orderly, unlocks the thick metal door that contains this observation hatch and swings it opens.

MAX
Hey, doc.

NEIL
Hey, Max. How's it going?

MAX
I've seen it worse.
(nods to Nancy)

NEIL
This is Nancy Thompson, Max.
Nancy, this is Max -- he runs
this ward.

Nancy exchanges greetings, but already she's already distracted on some deep level, seemingly merely by the place. The 'Unit.'

Max watches her walk alone into the ward, not waiting for Neil. As if looking for someone or some thing she already knows.

MAX
Little older than the rest, ain't she?

NEIL
She's not a patient, Max.

Max cracks a sly grin.

MAX
Then what is she, boss?

Neil looks at Nancy, and adjusts his glasses. Grins.

NEIL
Beautiful, gifted.
(lower)
Interesting. I think she can help us.

MOVING WITH NANCY AND NEIL -- as he sketches --

NEIL (CONTD)
(to Nancy)
Special Adolescent Ward. Set it up myself, for these guys...

Nancy notices they've already fallen under the gazes of the room's inhabitants -- VARIOUS TEENAGERS lounging around the hall and NURSE'S STATION. Some are in jeans and t-shirts, some in bathrobes, some with bedroom slippers, some barefoot.

JENNIFER, a blond girl of about 14, comes up to Nancy. She's holding a cigarette, unlit.

JENNIFER
Hey, Neil. This your latest?

NEIL
Jennifer, this is Nancy. I think she may be spending some time here, helping me out with you guys.

Nancy shakes Jennifer's hand; notices burn marks on her arm.

JENNIFER
Cigarette burns. That's why they won't let me smoke.
(points to different welts)
Menthol, regular, ultra-light.

Kirsten appears, wrists bandaged, and comes over.

KIRSTEN
Nancy.

She gives a careful hug -- then steps back, instantly a more guarded. But she gives a little smile. And Nancy smiles back, warm and direct.

NANCY
Kirsten. How y'doin'? Okay?

Kirsten gives a little shrug. Coping.

Nancy nods. We get the feeling she understands the girl completely, and at the same time we sense that Nancy has no idea why she feels this way.

Neil leads Nancy on, Max pacing them.

MAX
(sotto voce)
We called her mother -- the woman didn't even want to come get her daughter -- said she was getting her legs waxed today. Can you believe that shit?

Neil knocks gently at a doorway.

NEIL
Taryn? We bother you for a minute? I want you to meet someone.

INT. TARYN'S ROOM -- DAY.

NANCY and NEIL ENTER --

Taryn is a 15 year old black girl. She sits on her bed drawing. Like most of the kids, she seems removed, guarded.

TARYN
Hiya.

She sees Nancy looking at her drawing.

INSERT, DRAWING --

fire, fire and flames, very intense.

NANCY
You like fire, Taryn?

TARYN
Sometimes you need it. Sometimes you gotta burn something all the way down.

They're interrupted by the SOUND of a COMMOTION O.C.

INT. UNIT -- CORRIDOR.

Neil rushes out to see several ORDERLIES wrestling a huge boy down the hall. Nancy ENTERS from the room, too. Looking strangely drawn.

NEIL AND MAX -- join the other orderlies in subduing the big boy -- KINCAID. He's about 17, 250 pounds, bald. And mean as hell.

NEIL
What the hell happened?

ORDERLY
Man, I don't know. One of his hallucinations -- he just nutted out on us!

NEIL
Let's get him to the Quiet Room.
(to the kid as they move him)
Hey, Kincaid, you okay? What's happening?

KINCAID
Up yours sideways!

INT. 'QUIET ROOM' -- DAY.

The Orderlies strap the boy down to a chair bolted to the floor in the center of the room. Although the straps are thick leather and the chair sturdy, the huge kid strains and lurches so hard

that everything seems seconds from giving way.

NEIL
Kincaid, cool it out! You want to be left off medication, cut the shit!

Kincaid glares at him --

KINCAID
Fuck you!

He snaps one of the thick leather bands -- immediately knocking an orderly sprawling -- uprooting the chair. And he half scoots, half hops across the room -- kicking a leg free just in time to drop another Orderly with a hard kick to the shin. And then he's free of it, kicking the whole broken chair into a corner -- standing up like a grizzly and bellowing --

KINCAID
I'm gonna lunch you fuckers so bad your grandchildren are gonna be born with broken arms!

He starts for them -- then stops.

REVERSE TO HIS POV -- TO NANCY --

Just standing in the doorway.

BACK ON KINCAID.

Stone silent. Still. Mouth a little open. Like a kid caught with his hand in the cookey jar.

NANCY
What did you see?

He answers in a tiny voice, full of vulnerability.

KINCAID
I want to go home.

Nancy advances on him like a calm, firm mother. No nonsense.

NANCY
What did you just see, Kincaid?
Did you see something back there?

Kincaid swallows.

KINCAID
The man with the hat.

Now it's Nancy's turn to be brought up cold. Her voice has a little catch to it now.

NANCY
What was his name?

Kincaid looks down at her, blinks, then grins.

KINCAID
Dr. Seuss.

He dissolves into laughter, a hacking cachination that bends him over in paroxysm of coughing. He holds his sides and rocks, suddenly silent, overwhelmed.

KINCAID (CONTD)
Oh, man. Oh, man...

He sits down in the middle of the floor and holds his head as if if were a cracked vase.

INT. UNIT -- CORRIDOR -- DAY.

Neil leads Nancy out. She seems spent.

NEIL
You okay?

She nods.

NANCY
I want to see more. I want to see all of them.

He looks at her. She's serious. They go off down the hall towards the rest of the kids.

EXT. THE HOSPITAL'S GROUNDS -- DAY.

PAN DOWN FROM SUN DAPPLED TREES AND BLUE SKY --

NANCY and NEIL walk along a path of pea-gravel, tired, but closer now. Like two associates who have known each other for years.

NEIL
They come from all over the country. Why they end up in this county, we don't have a clue. We just know we find them on the streets, in abandoned buildings, along the rail line.

NANCY
Anything in common?

NEIL
Two. One is they all tried to kill themselves.

Nancy looks up, caught off-guard.

NEIL (CONTD)
I wish I could say that was unusual. Unfortunately the county's in the middle of a damn suicide storm -- always teenagers -- always from out of town. At least until Kirsten. The only thing about these kids that's different from all the rest is that they failed the attempt. That and...

NANCY
And?

NEIL
They all have severe sleep disorders. Insomnia, narcolepsy, bed-wetting, waking hallucinations...

Nancy holds her breath.

NANCY
Nightmares?

Neil looks at her, then shakes his head.

NEIL
No chance of that at least.

NANCY
How come?

NEIL
I've put them on the EEG -- they don't have REM sleep -- they don't dream. It's as if they're terrified to.

A YOUNG AIDE appears and calls over.

AIDE
Doc, they found the car you were asking about.

Neil looks at Nancy and grins.

NEIL
Eureka.

NE3.1E

EXT. GRAIN ELEVATOR -- DAY.

NEIL'S CAR -- pulls up and Neil and Nancy get out. They walk towards a knot of farmer-spectators and a highway patrol unit, gathered fifty yards from the towering grain elevator. There's no sign of Nancy's car. Just a huge crane.

NEIL
Morning. You found the car?

OFFICER
Yup.

NEIL
Don't know how anybody drove it -- it had a broken axel.

Neil's eyes go up the crane as the big machine WHINES to life.

OFFICER
Maybe they didn't drive it. Maybe they flew it.

CU NANCY --

She looks up. Reacts in shock. High up there, 200 feet over the fields and swinging off the the elevator's lofty roof, is her car. Utterly trashed.

JUMP CUT TO TIGHT ANGLE ON GROUP --

As the car is set down FOREGROUND. It's paint is marred over every inch with a vicious series of slashes, all running in parallel groups of four. The tires are similarly slashed, hanging in rubbery ribbons; same thing for the seats, slashed and

spilling out their stuffings -- and the dash.

The cop looks at Nancy.

OFFICER
You got anybody around here you know of that don't want you here?

The young woman is pale, speechless.

NEIL
She just moved here, for godsakes.

The cop walks back to his car to radio, muttering to himself.

OFFICER
Well somebody sure as hell has a sick sense of humor, that's for damn sure.

Nancy turns to Neil.

NANCY
(gravely)
Neil -- I want to go to Kirsten's house.

Neil lifts his eyebrows.

NANCY (CONTD)
You hired me as an assistant to help with these kids. It's time I got to work.

EXT. KIRSTEN'S HOUSE -- DAY.

ESTABLISHING SHOT -- the house and its neighborhood. Understated money and taste.

INT. KIRSTEN'S HOUSE -- DAY.

LOOSE SHOT ON NEIL, NANCY and Kirsten's mother, MRS PARKER, a woman carefully and expensively preserved. The house is out of Architectural Digest.

NANCY
Mrs Parker -- was Kirsten acting different?? Did you notice any-

NANCY
thing strange before she made the attempt?

The woman, who looks like she'd rather be anywhere but here, addresses her answer to Neil.

MRS PARKER
You know I think this whole thing has been blown out of proportion. Kirsten always has been a child who's sought attention, and now she's got it from you, and your... assistant?
(straightens a cushion)
But she's not going to get it from me.

Nancy swallows her anger.

NANCY
Did she have nightmares?

MRS PARKER
Wher I took away her credit cards and she couldn't shop.

NANCY
I'm serious.

MRS PARKER
(sharper)
I'm serious too. Look, I don't know what you want from me, but --

NEIL
(diplomatic)
We're just looking for some answers, Alice. There've been other kids, it's not just Kirsten --

MR PARKER ENTERS -- a tanned, unsmiling man in tennis togs; impatient and obviously up on the conversation from eavesdropping.

MR PARKER
Doctor Guiness -- it was nice of you and your little helper to stop by, but we've got to get to the club.

MRS PARKER
(rising, brightly)
I'm in my first tennis tournament. Isn't that a scream?

NANCY
Can I see her room?

The woman already has her racket and bag.

MRS PARKER
Whatever for?

NANCY
(lying well)
She mentioned she needed socks. She wanted me to get her some extra socks.

The woman sighs and plops down, her legs crossed, her foot kicking impatiently.

MRS PARKER
First door up the stairs.
(Nancy goes up; Mrs Parker smooths her hair and smiles to Neil)
My husband and I intend to put her on a plane for New York where she can try her little temper tantrums at St Girard's -- a four-star Catholic girls' boarding school. They'll know what to do with her.

INT. KIRSTEN'S UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

NANCY ENTERS.

A room with some warmth and humor. Nancy looks around quickly, checking out the closet, opening it -- finding nothing but hanging clothes. She opens a drawer. There's a color photo strip -- the kind dispensed from photo booths.

INSERT -- PHOTO STRIP

It's Kirsten and a friend, mugging it up. The friend has red hair... it's the Hitcher Nancy picked up on the road.

CU NANCY.

Shaken. She quickly puts it down and grabs some socks. Runs from the room.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- DAY.

AERIAL SHOT -- MOVING WITH NEIL'S CAR -- MUSIC SWEEPING up over it all, ominous and profound.

INT. NEIL'S CAR -- DAY.

NEIL
Some mother, huh? No mystery there why a kid would try to kill herself.

Nancy makes no effort to answer. Her eyes are locked on the dark house now revealed coming up on her side of the car, just visible through the trees.

The ranch house.

Just then the car slows.

NANCY
(sharply)
I don't want to stop here.

Neil looks at her, a little startled, then indicates the road ahead.

NEIL
(Bogart)
You want to run the roadblock?

Nancy looks ahead and sees several patrol cars and several cops, half blocking the road. A FARMER on a tractor has stopped to help. Neil edges slowly toward them until one of the cops flags him down.

COP
That you, Doctor Guiness?
(sees it is)
Maybe you better come take a look.

Neil gets out. Nancy sits tight, sensing something. The Cops are right in the spot where she went off the road the other night. She averts her eyes from it. Then just has to look across at the house. She straightens.

/

IN HER POV -- IN ONE OF THE HOUSE'S WINDOWS --

A movement, back there in the darkness -- just the merest suggestion of something...

EXT. THE CAR -- DAY.

Nancy gets out of the car, biting her lip, and strains to look into the house. From this distance, she just can't see anything inside.

You'd have to get closer.

Nancy starts walking towards the house.

WITH NEIL AND THE COPS -- as Neil arrives. There's a body on the gurney, covered with a sheet. Only the distinctive red hair streams out from beneath. The cop lifts the sheet for Neil to see.

COP
This one's gonna be hard to trace.

NEIL
Jesus Christ. What happened to her?

The cop drops the sodden sheet, stuffing a chaw of Red Man in his cheek.

COP
Crows got to her.

He offers the tin to Neil; Neil waves it away.

NEIL
Where'd you find her?

COP
(pointing up)
Hanging in a fork of the branches up the top of that oak. Suicide.

Neil looks up, then back to the cop.

NEIL
You telling me she climbed up into some tree, just to kill herself? No sign of foul play?

The cop shakes his head.

COP
Field's just plowed. Only one set of prints leadin' up to the tree...
(prods a bare foot)
Her print, all right. She climbed up herself, 'less something pulled her up.

He grimaces with brown tobacco teeth.

COP
You tell me. 'There crows that big?

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EXT. RANCH HOUSE -- DAY.

Nancy crosses the littered front yard, just as in her nightmare, and steps onto the porch. Touches the wind-chimes. Peers into a window. Can't see from out here.

She goes inside.

INT. RANCH HOUSE LIVING ROOM -- DAY.

NANCY ENTERS. All is normal. Plumb. The air without texture. She goes into the back of the house.

INT. IN THE BACK AREA -- DAY.

IN THE PLACE WHERE THE ELEVATOR WAS -- nothing now but an old cupboard. She opens it. Empty.

She turns to go. Notices one other door. Opens it.

LOOKING INTO ANOTHER LARGE ROOM.

There's a table, chairs... Nancy feels some strange reluctantance to step inside, but forces herself. Her first step is her last -- the 'floor' is ripple-less fluid -- and she plunges in over her head. The table and chairs remain, hanging in their own gravity, intact.

UNDERWATER

Stunned, Nancy sees something at the bottom of the pool and swims towards it... It's her father, in a policeman's uniform, inky

red blood streaming from where he cut his eyes.

AT THE SURFACE -- as Nancy bursts back out, gasping for air.

She pulls herself out of the watery pit and flops exhausted onto the floorboards of the hall. Then she hears a BABY CRYING. Upstairs.

ANGLE AT THE STAIRS

Nancy goes up.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL -- DAY.

She follows the sound of the baby's CRIES, down this corridor that's somewhat slanted to the side, somewhat out of kilter. She seems to get larger as she goes, the perspective shifting crazily.

She arrives at a door, tiny compared to her now huge bulk.

INTERCUT: HALLWAY AND NEW ROOM

She stops as she SEES --

AN INFANT -- clothed in filthy little trousers and red and green sweater, and with a grimy leather glove on one hand.

A glove tipped with long, keen blades on each finger...

NANCY

What...?

The infant stops crying instantly, turns and lifts itself on one elbow. And its face is Freddie's -- a hash of burned flesh, sneering teeth and gleaming eyes. And he raises his claw to her.

FREDDIE

Oh, mamaaaaa!

He suddenly swells into the proportions of Freddie the man -- <u>his</u> room swelling in size and him with it!

Nancy crashes back against the wall of the hallway, nearly falling, the hall is so crazily tilted now, and <u>she is shrinking</u>!

REVERSE TO FREDDIE -- FULL-GROWN, MEAN AND UGLY as we know and

love him. He leaps off the table, and the chase is on!

HALLWAY/STAIRS -- both now 'normal' size --

Nancy runs screaming down the stairs --

INT. FRONT ROOM -- DAY.

NANCY -- falling and hitting her head on the front door -- and Freddie is upon her. She recovers and twists as best she can, just managing to slide out from beneath him, slide out the front door.

EXT. THE RANCH HOUSE -- DAY.

Freddie doesn't follow her outside -- but his voice does -- snaking after her, burning her ears --

FREDDIE
Cunt! I'll get you -- asleep or awake! I'll shit on your corpse!

Nancy runs like the wind, her eyes blind with tears.

EXT. ROAD -- DAY.

Neil, still with the cops, turns, hearing the cries -- and Nancy runs screaming into his arms.

NEIL
What is it! Are you okay!?

NANCY
He's back there -- in the house!

Neil looks. The house isn't visible from here.

NEIL
What house?

NANCY
Back by the field -- oh, shit -- the bastard's still alive! It wasn't just a nightmare -- I wasn't asleep -- can't you understand? I wasn't asleep!

COP 1
Must be the old Krueger house.

COP 2
(grins)
Some say it's haunted.
(to Neil, under his breath)
She one of your patients?

Neil turns away from their looks to Nancy.

NEIL
We'll go check it out.

NANCY
No! He'll... he'll get me -- !

NEIL
No. No he won't.
(tenderly, firm)
Come on. We'll do it together.

He leads her off. The cops shake their heads and head for their cars as the ambulance peels out with the body.

EXT. FRONT YARD OF RANCH HOUSE -- DAY.

AS THEY WALK --
It's the pills you're taking...

Nancy looks at him, angered.

NANCY
What the hell you talking about?

NEIL
Hypnocyl's an experimental drug.
Prolonged use causes hallucinations.
Paranoia. Now, to prove a point --

He goes up on the porch and opens the front door.

INT. RANCH HOUSE -- DAY.

THEY ENTER. Everything is super normal. No watery floors. No elevator. No Freddie.

NEIL
See?

Nancy says nothing. Doesn't even look around. She knows...

EXT. THE ROAD/RANCH HOUSE -- DAY.

NANCY AND NEIL walk out. Neil gentle with his truth.

NEIL
(remembering)
I've been to this house before...

NANCY
When?

NEIL
A few weeks ago some guy barricaded himself in there and tried to burn it down. Said the house was 'alive'. A schizophrenic. That's why the cop joked about it.

NANCY
Where is he now?

NEIL
At the hospital.

Nancy gets in the car.

NANCY
I want to see him. Now.

He jumps in the car and they pull away.

As they do, CAMERA SLOWLY PANS TO THE HOUSE. So benign. So empty. Then...

ANGLE ON A FRONT WINDOW.

Its glass begins to stretch out as if made of warm plastic -- until the shape of Freddie can be discerned. He's pushing out of the window the way a fist would stretch out rubber or plastic. Freddie seems to be a part of the house... he IS the house. And he watches their car go.

EXT. THE ASYLUM -- DAY.

ESTABLISH THE ASYLUM -- The light low, the shadows slanting.

INT. BACK WARD -- DAY.

A PADDED ISOLATION CELL. Only one high, barred window.

ANGLE TO THE DOOR -- NANCY AND NEIL ENTER.

NEIL
(whispers)
They just let him off the med unit a few days ago.

A FIGURE

lays crouched in the corner, his back to them. The man.

NANCY
Hello?

The man straightens, but doesn't turn around.

NEIL
(still low)
He blinded himself while he was in the house. He hasn't responded to anyone, so --

Nancy reacts. Looks again to the man. The man turns around. His eyes are bandaged, but we can see clearly now that it's Nancy's father, John.

JOHN
Baby?

Nancy runs to him. The two embrace fiercely. Neil watches all of this, not knowing what to think.

NANCY
Neil, this... is my father.

Neil gulps. Stunned. But he's learned to expect the unexpected from this woman.

NEIL
I -- I'll leave you two alone.

NEIL EXITS.

JUMP CUT TO JOHN'S FACE -- TO HIS BANDAGED EYES. Turning back to Nancy now that they're alone. His question is calm, not lost.

JOHN
Do you know what's happening?

Nancy just hugs him tight, thinking he's gone mad.

NANCY
Daddy, I missed you so much -- I looked all over for you -- why --

He gently holds her away.

JOHN
I always wanted to protect you. Even from parts of reality. That was a mistake. After that night on Elm Street, I knew I was just protecting myself, not you. I knew I had to confront him -- had to track him down... to the place where he was most vulnerable.

Nancy swallows, scared.

NANCY
To the house?

John nods.

JOHN
He's getting stronger, moving up. Passing into higher and higher levels of evil. He's got to be stopped now... forever.
(beat)
Burned in the house where he was born.

NANCY
But Krueger's dead -- he's only in dreams -- how can you hurt him by burning his house?

JOHN
Because his house <u>is</u> a dream. It's an entrance into Krueger's nightmare for those who have known him.

Nancy takes a breath. This man is not sane. But he's not insane, either.

JOHN (CONTD)
Burn it down. Burn it down, while it still will burn! Or else you'll live on this earth with what he makes of it.
(takes her hand)
Burn it.

She pulls her hand away, frightened by his intensity.

INT. CORRIDOR -- DAY.

NANCY EXITS THE CELL --

NEIL, waiting nearby, closes the door and locks it.

The two just look at each other, Nancy leaning with her back to the door.

NEIL
You okay?

She isn't able to answer.

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EXT. NEIL'S HOUSE -- NIGHT.

A star-studded night. The lights of the house glow warmly.

INT. NEIL'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT.

Nancy's watching TV in the living room. Neil ENTERS, wearing a robe, a little bleary-eyed.

NANCY
I couldn't sleep.

NEIL
Your room too cold?

NANCY
A little.

NEIL
I'll get you some extra covers.
(charming)
Or you could, uh, sleep in my room.

NANCY
(smiles)
Lighten up, Doctor Guiness. I'm a houseguest, remember? Be polite to your houseguest.

NEIL
Sorry.

NANCY
It's okay.

NEIL
I won't ask you again.
(beat)
At least, not tonight.

Nancy smiles as Neil EXITS. Then looks off, more sober.

INT. HOSPITAL. SPECIAL TEENAGE UNIT -- NIGHT.

Max, the bug black orderly, walks through, dimming lights.

INT. JOEY AND LAREDO'S ROOM -- NIGHT

JOEY and LAREDO are two more of the kids on this special unit. Joey is 19, frail and spasmodic. Through enormous concentration and effort he has arranged his twisted body, controlled his hands enough to build a model of a house. He's putting the finishing touches on it --

LOOKING CLOSER, AT THE HOUSE -- made of popsicle sticks, paper mache, thread and cardboard, it's a perfect match, right down to the little mobile on the front porch...

Laredo is 17, handsome, long-haired. He sits before about 50 miniature clay creations. Monsters, wizards, warriors - done with great imagination and skill. He's telling Joey a story, apparently based on these creations. He's intense, totally absorbed in the fantasy. Joey never responds, but then, he never has to.

LAREDO
In the kingdom of Hesh, on the

LAREDO (CONTD)
outside of the envelope of time, the terrible Moment was on them. And they sent out a plea, and from all over the fabric of the Sapphire Univearse came the warriors, each with a special skill. And they had but one calling, one destiny -- to kill the mad King and bring peace to Hesh.
(looks up to Joey)
Ever been to Hesh?

Joey says nothing.

LAREDO (CONTD)
Didn't think so.

MAX (ENTERING)
Lights out, gentlemen.

LAREDO
But, Max --

MAX
I know, Laredo -- you don't sleep. But neither does Doc Maddalena. And she'll have my ass if she drops in and sees you guys up.

LAREDO
At least let me get my clay, Max.

MAX
Alright, but fast. Goodnight, Joey. Sweet dreams.

Max turns off the light, EXITS. Laredo also EXITS.

INT. TARYN AND KIRSTEN'S ROOM -- NIGHT.

MAX turns off the lights. The girls protest.

MAX
Sorry, ladies.

KIRSTEN/TARYN
'Night Max.

INT. KINCAID AND PHILIP'S KID'S ROOM -- NIGHT.

Max ENTERS. Kincaid lays on one bed, awake. PHILIP, his roomie, a frail, thirteen year-old, is fast asleep on the other bed.

KINCAID
(friendly)
Hey, you sorry sucker.

MAX
Goodnight, big man.

KINCAID
(pointing to Philip)
Hey, Max -- this motherfucker Philip sleepwalks.

MAX
Long as he brings back coffee and donuts.

They laugh as Max turns out the lights.

INT. ARTS AND CRAFTS ROOM -- NIGHT.

Laredo fetches his clay from a drawer -- the stuff wrapped in wet oilcloth. He sets it on a table in the darkened room. There is a gust of wind that sends a shiver through him. He turns his head quickly.

LAREDO
Max?

INT. NURSE'S STATION -- NIGHT.

Max watches TV at the quiet station. In B.G., the sleepwalking Philip appears in the doorway of his room, still in his pajamas.

PHILIP -- THE SLEEPWALKER --

Stands in the doorway, his lower lip quivering fiercely. He's like a child too terrified to cry. Behind him, like a grotesque, hellish puppeteer, is FREDDY. who is 'walking' him, his hand under the boy's arms, grabbing his wrists, his feet under the boy's. Philip/The Sleepwalker looks like he's trying to get Max's attention, but Max is laughing at something on the TV -- and Philip is really paralyzed, as if stung and impaled by a spider.

BACK TO MAX.

Still watching TV. We SEE the sleepwalker slowly sleepwalk from the room and on down the corridor. We do not see Freddy -- only Philip, lurching steadily forward, guided by his invisible mentor.

HALLWAY.

We SEE Freddie walking his charge down the hall. Philip is whimpering in his sleep --

PHILIP
Please! Why? Why me? Why, why?!

FREDDIE
Why? Because I like you.

Freddie laughs, slime drooling from his mouth onto Philip's face.

INT. ARTS AND CRAFTS ROOM -- NIGET.

Laredo goes to the door and peers out to the hallway through the crack.

INT. HALLWAY.

Philip walks his death-walk. We DO NOT see Freddie -- the boy appears to be walking alone.

LAREDO'S POV

At first Philip walks alone, then Freddie FADES IN and FADES OUT like bad reception on a TV.

LAREDO

Eyes widening, letting this strange apparition pass by before running out to the hall in the opposite direction.

As Laredo runs, we SEE Philip sleepwalking ALONE in B.G., about to EXIT the hall.

PHILIP --

Freddie cheerfully walking him directly through a wall.

So much for hospital security.

INT. KINCAID'S ROOM -- NIGHT.

Laredo wakes Kincaid, pointing to Philip's empty bed.

KINCAID
What the fuck's wrong, dickhead, wakin' me? You got a death wish?
(sees bed is empty)
Where's the sleep zombie?

LAREDO
Kincaid -- your roomie's, uh, -- you gotta come see!

He runs out. Kincaid follows him out, cursing and complaining.

INT. HALLWAY -- NIGHT.

They go down the hall to where Freddy walked Philip. They move stealthily as cats, and Max continues watching TV, oblivious to the action.

EXT/INT. ASYLUM/ROAD -- NIGHT.

INTERCUTTING BETWEEN --

The robed sleepwalker walks alone, out the entrance, right through the locked door. A nearby guard sleeps, not seeing a thing.

CAMERA PANS UP -- SEEING --

LAREDO and KINCAID -- appearing in a second story window, watching --

IN THEIR POV -- we SEE the Sleepwaker walked by Freddie to the curb. Almost at the same time, we HEAR the SIREN of an ambulance APPROACHING at high speed. Then the ambulance ENTERS FRAME.

BACK TO KINCAID AND LAREDO --

MAX
Oh, shit! He's gonna kill him --
(yelling to the Kid)
HEY, PHILIP! WAKE UP! WAKE UP!

NEIL
I think we should talk about... what happened last night to Phillip.

KINCAID
Yeah, and who killed him.

MADDALENA
No one killed Philip, Kincaid.

KINCAID
Bullshit.

MADDALENA
He was a sleepwalker. Sleepwalkers often harm themselves --

Kincaid leaps to his feet, jamming his finger through the air at the woman.

KINCAID
He didn't just 'harm' himself, goddamit!
(lower)
You didn't see what Joey and me saw.

He sits down. The woman takes a frightened pause, then clears her throat carefully, asking with as much respect as she can fake.

MADDALENA
Why don't you tell the group what you saw, then.

NANCY
(more sympathetic)
Tell them.

Kincaid starts, then catches himself. Realizing it would sound as crazy as it sounds to him.

KINCAID
What's the point.
(lower)
But I saw it.

LAREDO
(quietly)
The mad king is hungry for flesh.
Thirsty for blood.

KIRSTEN
Becky's dead, too.

Maddalena jerks around.

NEIL
Becky who?

NANCY
(under her breath)
The hitchhiker...

KIRSTEN
Becky Freeman. The girl in the tree.
(lower)
She was my friend.

MADDALENA
(to Neil)
What's she talking about?

Neil looks around, unsettled.

NEIL
The last girl the police found...
But they couldn't identify her...

KIRSTEN
(sings sadly)
Rock'a'bye baby, in a tree top...

CLOSE ON NANCY

NANCY
(to herself)
Oh god...

KINCAID
Fucking bullshit!

MADDALENA
You're angry. That's good.

KINCAID
Eat shit, Maddalena!

Kirsten stands up, scared. She tugs at Neil's sleeve.

KIRSTEN
I want to go home now!

MADDALENA
You'll have to wait until tomorrow -- that's when your parents are releasing you.

NANCY
But she can't --
(jumps up and grabs Kirsten, beggin her)
Kirsten, listen to me -- it's dangerous -- !

Neil stands, a little embarassed by Nancy's outburst.

MADDALENA
You're out of line, Ms. Thompson!

NANCY
(still talking only to Kirsten)
You've got to stay -- you've got to be around the others to be safe --

Maddalena stalks over to Neil, hissing low at him.

MADDALENA
Neil, I want your 'assistant' out of here. Now.

Neil takes a beat, then yields to pecking order. He ushers Nancy out. But this uneasiness, this warning by Nancy has not been lost on the other kids. Every one of their eyes is on her as she goes. The look is so intensely unified it gives Maddalena, years of professional dissection of every node of human madness aside, the living creeps.

INT. UNIT -- CORRIDOR.

NEIL
Maybe you and I should go somewhere and have a little talk, y'know? Just go over some feelings.

Nancy jerks away from his hand.

NANCY
Don't give me that therapist crap, goddamit! I'm not nuts -- and neither are those kids.
(calming just slightly, now begging)
Neil, you've got to keep Kirsten here. Something's going to happen, I just know it. I can feel it.

Neil throws up his hands.

NEIL
Nancy, I couldn't if I wanted to. Her parents have a legal right to take her home.
(another, more personal tack)
Anyway, Jesus, it's not something you yell out in Group.

NANCY
I saw her friend Becky -- understand? The night she died -- she was in my dream -- I saw the look in her eyes, I --

She sinks against the wall, lost in the memory. So distinct.

NEIL
(tender)
The hitchiker that wasn't there?
(lets it sink in, then...)
You know something? I used to work with veterans. And one thing you and these kids have in common, is something a lot of the vets had: we call it Delayed Stress Syndrome.

Nancy looks up. Smiles wanly.

NANCY
You saying we're all shell shocked?

Neil sighs.

NEIL
I don't know what I'm saying.

NEIL
Why don't you get some rest, Nancy. You need to --

NANCY
-- Sleep?

She walks away, leaving him utterly lost.

INT. HOSPITAL DREAM LAB -- LATER THAT NIGHT.

Kirsten is in her pajamas, sitting on a bed in the lab. Neil is attaching electrodes to her head. Nancy ENTERS.

NANCY
Kirsten wasn't in her room...

Sees Kirsten is there.

NEIL
I wanted to run an EEG before she leaves tomorrow.

NANCY
(to Kirsten)
How do you feel?

KIRSTEN
Like the Bride of Frankenstein.

NEIL
Sleepy?

KIRSTEN
Sort of. What's this supposed to prove, anyway?

NEIL
By recording how you sleep, we might be able to find out why you got depressed.

SEVERAL HOURS LATER.

Neil and Nancy drink coffee, watching Kirsten through a two-way mirror. She is sleeping soundly. Neil makes small talk.

NEIL
The kids like you. A lot.

NANCY
They've been through so much. I don't know what happened to them -- but I know they aren't crazy.

The EEG machine begins the audible SCRATCH of needle on paper. Nancy looks over at it.

NANCY (CONTD)
What's going on?

NEIL
She's starting to dream, that's all. Hey, I wanna split. Shuttle to the boarding house leaves in five minutes.

NANCY
Okay. Guess it's been a long day.

NEIL
Be right back. I just want to tell Max I'm going home.
(he EXITS)

Nancy goes right up to the 'mirror' and watches Kirsten sleep.

KIRSTEN

Her face twitches.

THE EEG MACHINE.

The needle sweeps its arc wildly, gaining speed.

NANCY.

She watches Kirsten closely as if she feels something is wrong.

KIRSTEN.

Suddenly she gets a weird look on her face and sits up in the bed, her body rigid. Then -- the impossible happens: her whole body begins to shake and then she DISAPPEARS, fading into thin air.

NANCY.

She GASPS, astonished.

NANCY
(feebly)
Kirsten?
(turns to the door, her voice still weak)
Neil?
(screams)
Neil! Oh God! Neil!

Neil rushes in.

NEIL
What is it? What's wrong?

NANCY
She's gone!

Nancy turns back to the 'mirror'. Kirsten lays there, asleep. Just as she was before.

NANCY (CONTD)
She... she sat up in bed -- and then... she -- she disappeared!

NEIL
Nancy, calm down.
(goes to the EEG)
Jesus, did you do something to the machine?

NANCY
Of course I didn't 'do anything' to the machine. I didn't touch it.

NEIL
(reading the 'strip')
Must be on the fritz. Too much activity. Nobody dreams like this.

NANCY
Neil, listen to me. She went away!

He turns and looks at her carefully.

NEIL
Nancy, are you still taking those pills?

NANCY
No. Why?

NEIL
I think you're having some mild hallucinations from the withdrawel.

NANCY
Don't patronize me!

NEIL
Come on. Let's go home.

H2

EXT. ASYLUM -- DAY.

Max walks Kirsten out to her mother's waiting Mercedes. Just before the girl gets in, Nancy runs up. They hug.

NANCY
Call me -- will you? If you need to talk?

KIRSTEN
I will. Promise.

MAX
Bye, Kirsten. You take care now.

KIRSTEN
Bye, Max.

Kirten's father takes her by the arm; her mother glares at Nancy from the car. Kirsten grins back at Nancy.

KIRSTEN
See you in my dreams.

The big door slams like a refrigerator on a trout. The tinted glass slides up, slicing Kirsten away.

Nancy puzzles over the remark as the big German machine tools away.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO --

EXT. ASYLUM -- NIGHT.

Windswept, surmounted by tortured clouds.

INT. THE UNIT -- NIGHT.

Jennifer, the girl with the cigarette burns, wanders out of her room onto the ward.

MAX at the Nurse's station, working on a chart.

MAX
What's the matter, Jennifer?

JENNIFER
Can't sleep, Max. Got a light?

MAX
Fresh out, Jenn. Why don't you log some tube time?

JENNIFER
But it's past TV curfew.

MAX
(winks)
I won't say nothin' about it. Besides -- if Max says go watch TV -- go watch TV.

JENNIFER
Thanks Max.

INT. TV ROOM -- NIGHT.

Jennifer ENTERS, turns on TV, sits down in chair. She watches for a few moments. We HEAR the drone of canned laughter from an old sitcom. Then STATIC.

She gets up and tries to adjust the set.

Unable to get the picture to return, she smacks the side of the TV once, twice. The third time, her hand is grabbed by a hand THAT COMES OUT OF THE SIDE OF THE TV.

Startled, Jennifer tries to move away. No dice -- the holding hand is powerful, relentless. Simultaneously a second hand -- this one RAZORED -- comes out of the screen itself -- while Freddie's head stretches out from the top of the set, wearing the 'rabbit ears' of its antenna like some horrible insect.

FREDDIE
Heeeerrrrreee'sss Freddie!

JENNIFER
Max! Please help me!

But Max doesn't come -- and with hideously brutal force, Freddie lifts her up and back, his arm stretching, so that Jennifer hangs, poised, in front of the set. His head ducks back in, like some huge ugly fish diving, and reappears in the screen.

We can SEE the TV SCREEN -- Freddie's face filling it obscenely.

JENNIFER
Help me! Please God help me!

FREDDIE
We've got a wonderful show for you tonight, Jennifer! 'Lights Out'!

With that, he RAMS her head like a battering ram straight into the screen, shattering her skull and the thick glass with a ringing blow and implosion of brain, tube and phosphors.

WIDER ANGLE

The girl's legs kick, then go limp. The corpse falls still, half in, half out of the hissing, sparking set.

I

EXT. CEMETERY -- DAY.

Nancy and Neil stand silent, watching the inexpensive coffin of Jennifer being lowered into the pit.

NEIL
I feel like the Catcher in the Rye, y'know? Standing by this big cliff, trying to catch all these kids running through the field, trying to jump. And for everyone I catch, three get past.

He turns away. Nancy looks off.

EXT. LYNDON JOHNSON SCHOOL -- DAY.

High school STUDENTS rush to class.

INT. SCHOOL -- DAY.

THE BUZZING, LOCKER-LINED HALL.

SALLY, an attractive 'social' blond, gossips at her locker with a few GIRLFRIENDS. She sees someone O.C., alerts her Girlfriends.

REVERSE SHOT.

Kirsten, looking a little pale, holding her books protectively to her chest. She still has bandages on her wrists.

SALLY
God, I can't believe they let her out!
(calling out)
Hi, Kirsten!

KIRSTEN
(nervous)
Hi.

SALLY
Your hair looks so good.

KIRSTEN
Thanks.

SALLY
Did, uh, did they have a beauty shop in the nuthouse?

The Girlfriends suppress giggles. Kirsten takes it with a smile, looks down at the floor. BRAD, Sally's boyfriend ENTERS. He puts his arm around Sally. Kirsten goes to her locker, which is only about 10 feet away.

BRAD
Hey, isn't that Kirsten Parker? Remember that commercial?
(to Kirsten)
Hey, Kirsten! "Don't take the car -- you'll kill yourself!"

Kirsten is wounded. Sally and the girlfriends laugh.

The BELL RINGS.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY.

Kirsten sits in the back row. Still, she seems to be the center of curiosity and attention for the kids in class. When the TEACHER is at the chalkboard, with her back to them, the Students steal glances at Kirsten's bandaged wrists. Sally and Brad sit neck to each other, holding hands between their desks. Sally yawns. PSYCH 1 is written on the board.

TEACHER
A human being spends approximately 4 1/2 years of his life in the dream state. Brad, would you please read from the text?

Brad drops Sally's hand. Picks up his book and stands.

BRAD
(reading)
While Hermes is leading the souls of the dead to the other world, he passes the demios, the village of dreams...

SALLY.

Her head nods.

KIRSTEN.

Begins to close her eyes.

BACK TO BRAD

BRAD (CONTD)
...and beyond this, only the anti-world, the realm of the dead...

SALLY -- nods out.

EXTREME CLOSE UP. KIRSTEN.

As if through a fog now. Sound is stretched out and muffled. She stands up.

LOOSEN TO MEDIUM SHOT OF CLASS.

Brad is reading but what comes from his mouth is slowed down, weird, incomprehnsible. Kirsten stands and walks over to Sally, who is filing her fingernails. Sally looks up at her with a bitch smile -- then, Kirsten TEARS OFF SALLY'S BLOUSE AND BRA with one quick yank.

SMASH CUT.

KIRSTEN AWAKENS with a start -- still at her desk.

SALLY SCREAMS -- she's half-naked, her blouse torn off, in the middle of class.

At first the Kids are stunned, then they begin to SHRIEK with laughter. The Teacher vainly tries to get control. Brad throws his jacket to Sally, who hides beneath it as she slinks out. She somehow suspects Kirsten -- but Kirsten's practically on the other side of the room. She tosses Kirsten a dirty look as she storms out -- Kirsten returns it with a smile of growing realization and amusement. The Kids continue to howl. Brad races after Sally.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE -- NIGHT.

ANGLE ON THE HOUSE --

Dark. Waiting.

We hear a SOUND. NANCY comes INTO FRAME -- lugging a gasoline can.

She gets about halfway across the yard to the front porch when the SOUND of an approaching car catches her attention.

She freezes, turns and sees --

HEADLIGHTS -- IN HER POV -- APPROACHING

Nancy runs into some bushes --

CLOSE ON HER IN BUSHES -- she ditches the gasoline can and hunkers down.

NANCY
(low)
Oh, shit...

IN HER POV -- we SEE a POLICE CAR cruise by.

Stop.

A COP gets out. Looks at the house. Stretches, turns and, caught in the light of his headlights, starts to relieve his bladder.

BACK ON NANCY -- groaning.

NANCY (CONTD)
Great.

She starts to look away, then something else catches her eye. Her eyes snap back to the car.

ANGLE BACK TO THE CAR -- as a big German Shepherd police dog jumps out, ears pricked, eyes straining towards her, nose lifted, bobbing, sucking in those molecules of Nancy's scent drifting to him over the slow tide of night air.

He starts to trot towards her, stops, bristles and barks sharply. Then a low growl.

BACK ON NANCY.

NANCY
Oh god, oh god...

THE COP --

Zips up, turns and regards the dog.

COP
What ya got, a rabbit? Huh?
It back there in that bush?

He laughs and takes out his service revolver. Aims lazily.

BLAM!

ON NANCY -- as the round buzzes through the bush not five inches from her head! She leaps up --

NANCY
No!

THE COP --

jerks the gun up in the air -- his mouth drops open --

COP
Jesus H. Christ!

NANCY

steps out of the bush, away from the gas can, trying to calm the barking dog, walking for the cop. The cop calls the dog off,

eyeing Nancy right back. Suspiciously.

COP (CONTD)
What the hell you doin' out here this hour? What you doin' in that bush?

Nancy smooths her jeans, gives her best imitation of an easy laugh.

NANCY
Same thing you were doing.

The cop is brought up short. He laughs back.

COP
Oh.
(holsters his gun)
Well, you goddam near got your head blown off doin' it tonight.
(looks more closely)
I seen you with Doc Guiness, didn' I?
(confirms it for himself)
Yeah, I remember. You belong back at the hospital, don't you?

Nancy draws herself up.

NANCY
I <u>work</u> at the hospital, thank you.

She flashes a hospital I.D. The cop scrutinizes it in his flashlight, then shrugs.

COP
Well. Then you better just be on your way, then. Right? That must've been your car back up the road a piece, right?

NANCY
Right.

Nancy starts walking. The cop watches her go.

COP
(low, to himself)
Nut house people.

J

INT. HOSPITAL -- NIGHT.

PAN DOWN FROM IRON-BARRED WINDOWS, CAMERA FOLLOWING A STREAM OF SUNLIGHT, TO --

NANCY'S FATHER.

Sitting in the center of the room, alert to the entrance of his daughter.

Nancy stops before him.

NANCY
Hi, Daddy. How ya doing?

FATHER
You didn't burn it, did you?

She sighs and sits down with him.

NANCY
I tried, I really did. But there was this cop, and a dog... Anyway, I couldn't get near it.

The man shakes his head and laughs softly.

FATHER
There's only one way. From the inside.
(cryptic)
Maybe even with the help of others...

Nancy looks up at him, confused.

NANCY
Who?

JOHN
(smiles)
A Dream Warrior. You might need some help.

Nancy ponders the odd word, turning it over in her mind.

NANCY
'Dream Warrior'. I don't understand.

He nods.

JOHN
You will.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO:

EXT. KIRSTEN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT.

ESTABLISHING SHOT. The house mostly dark, except for one window on the second floor.

INT. KIRSTEN'S ROOM -- NIGHT.

Kirsten, in PJ's, dials. Listens. Someone answers.

KIRSTEN
Nancy?
(response)
Oh. Well would you tell her Kirsten Parker called?
(question)
Oh, sure, everything is just fine. I just wanted to say hello.
(question)
No, no, that's not necessary. I... Maybe I'll call tomorrow.

She hangs up. Sighs, not knowing quite why she called, what she would have said, anyway.

She lies down on her bed.

Sullenly, she looks at a number of brochures, obviously provided by her mother: all of ST. GIRARD'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOR GIRLS. Pictures of Sisters, girls in uniform, stoic surroundings. She casts them onto the floor in disgust.

She turns off the light. She's just settling under the covers when both her arms are jerked into the air, in the position of crucifixion. Her legs kick off the covers and complete the picture. Horrified, she watches as STIGMATA appear on her hands, her feet, her stomach. Trembling, her "crucified" body then hovers over her bed.

CLOSE ANGLE ON HER BEDROOM WINDOW -- OPENING from an invisible

hand. Kirsten floats through into the night air.

EXT. KIRSTEN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT.

We see the form of Kirsten float out the second story window and hang in mid-air in front of the house, lit by a street-lamp.

KIRSTEN
(faint, timid)
Somebody help me!

EXT. CATHOLIC SCHOOL -- NIGHT.

The frightened, crucified body of Kirsten drifts into the entrance of a school whose door reads "ST GIRARD'S". There is a cross that is next to the sign and the cross squirms like a starfish or insect that's been pinned.

INT. CATHOLIC SCHOOL/CORRIDOR -- NIGHT.

She drifts, vertically now, through the locker-lined corridor. The doors of the lockers flap open, emitting steam, as if they are portals to Hell. She ENTERS a classroom.

INT. CLASSROOM -- NIGHT.

The classroom is full of CATHOLIC GIRLS in uniforms. They sit at their desks, hollow eyed. All of them have bandages around their wrists -- as does Kirsten -- bandages that are bloody and tattered, fluttering in an unseen wind.

Kirsten screams as she is floated past them and into the dark cloakroom. The girls do not hear her screams; their uniforms are a green and red plaid.

INT. CLOAKROOM --

A row of green and red striped sweaters raise their arms on hangers as if to greet Kirsten as she floats in. They grab her and pull her down. She is no longer "crucified", but still has the stigmata. She escapes through a door and surfaces inside:

INT. RANCH HOUSE -- NIGHT.

She lands in front of the elevator that Nancy encountered in her first dream. The door opens eagerly -- and FREDDIE lurches out at her, shrieking!

FREDDIE
Did you cross yourself today?

He crosses himself with his razored glove -- slashing his burned, rotting skin, so that pus and blood ooze forth from the "Zorro"-like laceration-pattern. He laughs and Kirsten runs up the stairs as he chases her.

MOVING WITH KIRSTEN -- nearly praying --

KIRSTEN
(to herself)
Please, Nancy -- help me! You've got to come! Nancy!

INT. NEIL'S GUEST ROOM (WAKING REALITY) -- NIGHT.

Nancy sits in bed, light on, fully awake. She is making an entry in her diary when suddenly her pen flies away from between her fingesr. Then the diary is flung crisply against the wall. Then the covers tear off of her.

NANCY
Jesus -- what's going on!

No time for an answer -- next instant Nancy is pulled down into the center of her bed with a whoosh -- GONE!

INT. RANCH HOUSE -- NIGHT (KIRSTEN'S DREAM)

Freddie has Kirsten cornered at the end of the upstairs hall.

FREDDIE
You can check in to this dream, Kirsten,
(hold up the steel claw)
but you can't check out!

KIRSTEN
Nancy!

Freddie lunges -- and at the same time Nancy DROPS THROUGH THE CEILING and crashes atop Freddie, knocking him sprawling. Nancy rolls away instinctively, looking around in panicked bafflement.

Kirsten regains her wits just enough to grab her friend's hand and run. Freddie is up and after them in a flash.

MOVING WITH THEM -- DOWN THE LONG CORRIDOR --

NANCY furious, shocked --

NANCY
What have you done to me!

KIRSTEN
I don't know. I mean -- I know, but I can't believe it!

They slam a door in Freddie's face --

ANOTHER CORRIDOR -- ENDLESS -- the girls racing along as they try to figure what the hell's going on!

NANCY
What happened?

KIRSTEN
I -- I just wished you were here -- and -- you were!

Freddie's claw can be heard ZINGING - SCRAPPING along the iron wall behind them -- coming closer!

NANCY
Well then wish us out of here!

They jam on the brakes, stopped by a slimey brick wall. They turn and see Freddie bearing down on them like a mad dog!

KIRSTEN
I wish I was back in bed!

Instantly they vanish -- and Freddie smashes into the brick wall at full speed -- WHAM!

INT. KIRSTEN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT.

Kirsten plummets from nowhere onto her bed -- hitting like a ton of bricks. A second later Nancy crashes onto the floor.

Beat. They both recover enough to look at each other, stunned.

NANCY
We gotta talk.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP -- NIGHT.

ECU of ENORMOUS NEON COFFEE CUP.

INT. COFFEE SHOP -- NIGHT.

Nancy and Kirsten talk intensely over coffee.

KIRSTEN
I don't know <u>how</u> I did it, I just <u>did</u>.

NANCY
Did you ever do anything like that before?

KIRSTEN
(dreamily)
When I was little -- with my brother, I'd bring him into a bad dream to help me. But he always said he never remembered anything the next day.

NANCY
Where would he wake up? Did you pull him into your room?

KIRSTEN
Nancy, I don't know! I can't remember! What are you going to do?

Nancy looks away.

NANCY
I don't know. Tell Neil, maybe.

KIRSTEN
Then he'll think I'm crazy. He'll think <u>you're</u> crazy!

NANCY
Neil's not like that.
(another thought)

NANCY (CONTD)
The man that was chasing us...
(low)
Have you dreamed of him before?

Kirsten looks off. Troubled.

KIRSTEN
I can't remember. I think I have, but whenever I try to think of when, I just get sort of... fogged out.

Nancy leans closer.

NANCY
Do you think you could... pull him out of a dream? Like you pulled me?

Kirsten looks around sharply.

KIRSTEN
You mean pull him into my room?
(low)
I don't ever want to see him again. Ever.

NANCY
You might not have a choice about that.

Kirsten looks deep into Nancy's eyes -- then looks quickly away, afraid of the grim certainty she sees in them.

KIRSTEN
I know...

Nancy takes her hand.

NANCY
Kirsten, will you help me? You won't have to face him.
(Kirsten looks back)
I'll do that.

K

EXT. NEIL'S HOUSE -- DAY.

A pleasant day. A little breeze. Birds whistle at each other.

INT. NEIL'S GUEST ROOM -- DAY.

Nancy's room, shades drawn -- a warm, golden half-light.

Nancy lies on the bed, dressed except for her shoes. Trying to relax herself into sleep. Kirsten sits at the side of the bed, looking nervous.

KIRSTEN
This is dumb, I should go with you. We had twice as much power together.

NANCY
It's too dangerous. Just keep an eye on me, a close eye, and wake me up if I look like I'm in any kind of distress. Okay?

KIRSTEN
It just seems so old fashioned this way. Kinda dumb.

NANCY
It works, believe me.

Kirsten looks at Nancy more carefully.

KIRSTEN
You've done this before, haven't you?

NANCY
Just do what I say, okay?

Nancy closes her eyes. Kirsten goes to the window, tips back the blind and looks out. Some wind has come up, spooking the trees. Kirsten turns back to Nancy; she's already asleep.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE -- DAY.

UP ANGLE TO THE SKY. Nancy floats down, touching the earth.

She heads for the bush.

ANGLE IN THE BUSH -- as Nancy finds the can of gasoline.

ANGLE AT THE PORCH -- as Nancy steps up to the front door. Something catches her eye. She looks down.

NANCY'S POV -- the scruffy welcome mat outside the door. It's 'Welcome' is spelled out in maggots.

NANCY -- reaches for the door knob. Holds her breath.

A split-second before she opens the door, somebody comes CRASHING OUT OF NOWHERE -- and thuds onto the porch inches from her!

Nancy jumps back with a shriek -- only to see its...

KIRSTEN. A little shaken up, a little sheepish.

KIRSTEN
Uh, thought you might need a little help.

Nancy lets out her breath in a shakey gasp.

NANCY
Jesus, you scared the shit out of me.

Kirsten stands up and brushes herself off, whispering.

KIRSTEN
Any sign of the bastard?

As if answering, there is a low menacing GROWL from behind them. They turn to see --

THE GERMAN SHEPHERD POLICE DOG -- BUT --

NOW WITH THE A COAT OF GREEN AND RED STRIPED FUR -- AND THE HEAD OF FREDDIE in place of the original dog's!

KIRSTEN (CONTD)
Oh god!

And with that he charges!

ANGLE BACK ON THE WOMEN -- as they run for it -- Nancy dropping the gasoline can -- both racing pell mell into the house.

INT. RANCH HOUSE (DREAM STATE) -- NIGHT.

LIVING ROOM -- the women race through.

BACK ON THE DOOR -- the Freddie dog barges through, saliva drooling from the monstrous mouth.

A HALLWAY -- as the two run through it.

NANCY
In here!

They dart inside a door. Slam it.

DARKNESS.

Their eyes adjust to the dim light of the room. There is a kind of fog that hangs in the air.

KIRSTEN
(whispers)
Nancy, I'm so scared! He can smell my fear, I'm sure!

NANCY
Don't let him -- we'll get out of this!

Nancy leads them to another door as the fog in this part of the room begins to lift. She opens the door and:

JENNIFER lurches into its frame, maggots devouring her head.

JENNIFER
Help me!

The girls SCREAM and turn around -- only to be confronted by -- FREDDIE -- fully human again -- big as a house! He slashes out at them -- Kirsten dives back, but not quite fast enough -- and Freddie cuts her arm deeply! Nancy grabs the now hysterical girl and drags her out the door into --

HALLWAY.

Nancy and Kirsten continue to run through the winding hallway of the house.

KIRSTEN
Oh, shit -- Kincaid! Help us, please -- I don't want to die!

INT. HOSPITAL (WAKING REALITY) -- NIGHT.

Kincaid is snoring in a chair in front of the TV. Joey sits nearby, watching the tube.

CLOSE UP -- KINCAID.

Agitated in his sleep. His body begins to tremble, as Nancy's did when Kirsten first 'pulled her in.' And then -- he is SUCKED DOWN INTO THE CHAIR -- and next instant he's gone.

JOEY.

Looks over. At the empty chair.

INT. RANCH HOUSE HALLWAY (DREAM) -- NIGHT.

Kincaid crashes into the dream, hitting the floor like a two hundred and fifty pound flesh bomb eight feet behind Freddie. The whole hallway shakes from the concussion, and Freddie leaps around.

KINCAID
What the fuck!?

He staggers up just as Freddie runs at him, glove of steel claws raised to strike. Kincaid takes this in in one microsecond -- and his street instincts cut in in the next -- his big fist shoots out on pure reflex and connects square on Freddie's jaw.

Freddie cartwheels backwards as the startled kid looks around and sees Nancy and Kirsten.

NANCY/KIRSTEN
Way to go, Kincaid!

KINCAID
Where the fuck am I?

He turns to Freddie just in time to see Freddie rise up, this time <u>twice as large</u> -- <u>looming up like a giant banshee, his claws twice as long</u>!

KINCAID
Holy shit!

Nancy moves with split second instinct --

NANCY
(to Kincaid)
Grab her arm -- quick!

Kincaid does as he's told as Nancy does the same with her left hand. Nancy looks up at the startled Kincaid as Freddie comes

closer --

NANCY
(sincere -- fast)
I'll explain later, Kincaid --
meanwhile we gotta get outta here!

And with that she hauls off and -- slaps him hard!

INT. ASYLUM TV ROOM (REALITY) -- NIGHT.

A startled Kincaid shoots up out of the chair and crashed back down into it, landing upside down. A split second later Nancy and Kirsten plunge out of thin air and crash into the room with him. All are stunned and disoriented.

Joey takes this all in, stunned.

MAX

races in, hearing the commotion -- Kirsten is nearly hysterical, and bleeding badly from the arm.

KINCAID
(shocked)
Musta been the acid I took in sixth
grade.

MAX
Jesus -- this is gonna need stitches!

He hauls her up, holding his hand over the wounds -- just as Doctor Maddalena ENTERS. The woman stops, shocked, and infuriated by this intrusion of disorder.

MADDALENA
What happened to her? Did you do
this, Kincaid?

KIRSTEN
(moaning it)
No! It was the man -- in the night-
mare!

Maddalena looks back to Kirsten -- seeing the girl is approaching shock.

MADDALENA
Kirsten, what are you doing back

MADDALENA (CONTD)
in here? How'd you even get in?

She looks in confusion between them all, then barks to Max --

MADDALENA (CONTD)
Get her down to emergency -- then admit her again. Call her parents. Kincaid to the Quiet Room -- Joey to bed --
(turning to Nancy)
As for you, just who the hell do you think you are to be playing games with my patients?

Nancy is too exhausted to respond.

MADDALENA (CONTD)
(low, disgusted)
I want you out of here, Thompson. You're a bad influence. I want you out, or I want you admitted.

She stalks out. Nancy simply puts her head in her hands.

L

EXT. ASYLUM -- DAY.

Nancy EXITS the hospital, carrying a small suitcase. Neil, coming from another direction, spots her and runs over.

NEIL
Nancy! Where you going?

NANCY
I'm leaving -- I don't belong here anyway, Neil. I just came to say goodbye to the kids.

NEIL
And you weren't going to say good-bye to me?

NANCY
I didn't know how.

NEIL
Look -- I'm not sure what happened last night, but I know it wasn't your fault.

Nancy takes a beat on his eyes. There's a real attraction there, and real trust, too.

NANCY
Thanks for the vote of confidence.
(lighter)
Can you give a girl a ride?

NEIL
Where to?

NANCY
Bus station.

NEIL
You got it.

EXT. NEIL'S HOUSE -- DAY.

They pull up to the house. Nancy has been dozing. She opens her eyes.

NANCY
Hey! I don't see any Greyhounds.

NEIL
I keep 'em in the kitchen.
(beat)
Stay with me.

She turns and looks at him. They kiss.

INT. NEIL'S BEDROOM -- DAY.

Neil and Nancy are in bed, making love. Nancy is crying softly as Neil makes love to her. They seem to come at once.

They lie there for a few moments, then:

NEIL
Do you always cry like that?

NANCY
When it's wonderful.

NEIL
You're a pretty complicated girl.

She watches out of the corner of an eye.

NANCY
That a euphemism for 'crazy'?

NEIL
I like 'em crazy. Good practice for me.

She turns to him, surveys his eyes.

NANCY
Neil? Have you ever thought of suicide?

NEIL
Not lately.

NANCY
Seriously. I mean, it's a way out, isn't it?

NEIL
Seems like an easy way out, to me.

Nancy considers this carefully.

NANCY
I don't think it's easy. It's scary. So final. But at least it takes the pain away.

He touches her. She doesn't look at him.

NANCY (CONTD)
The only reason I don't kill myself now... is because I still wouldn't have a guarantee that he would leave me alone, even after I was dead...

Neil gently takes her face and turns it to his.

NEIL
I don't want you to tell the story about that man. To anyone.

NANCY
Then you do think I'm crazy.

He kisses her softly.

NEIL
Let's go to sleep.

He kisses her again, turns off the light and pulls her down into his arms.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO SOMETIME LATER, NEW ANGLE --

THE TWO are fast asleep. Nancy's eyes slowly open. She HEARS the dripping of a faucet OFF SCREEN. Slipping a robe on, she gets out of bed.

INT. BATHROOM -- DAY.

It's the sink faucet dripping. Dripping blood, its basin drenched in deep scarlet.

NANCY twists the faucet shut. The blood stops.

But now another faucet is dripping. A heavier, spurting sort of DRIPPING.

CLOSE ON NANCY'S EYES -- swiveling to look.

IN HER P.O.V. -- we SEE, in a gap between the wall and the shower curtain, the larger faucet of the tub.

CLOSE UP, FAUCET -- gushing blood and strands of what look like tissue and hair.

VOICES
Nancy -- help us...

Nancy's eyes jerk around to the shower curtain -- one of those milky/clear things of heavy plastic.

REVERSE IN HER POV TO THE SHOWER CURTAIN -- as the faces of PHILIP, the HITCHER, and JENNIFER press up against it, smeared in blood, their dead eyes staring like dolls' eyes, their mouths moving against the plastic, supplicating --

WRAITHS
Kill him, Nancy -- kill him before
he kills us all --

A bloody hand comes round the corner of the curtain, up near the rod, and begins to pull it back. The SOUND of the curtain hooks

scraping along the steel rod makes a high, SCRAPING SOUND exactly like Freddie's claw!

INT. BEDROOM -- DAY.

BACK WITH NANCY IN BED -- as she awakens with Neil, shaking and about to scream. She clamps her hands over her mouth, stifling it, but the sudden move jolts Neil awake nontheless. He sits up and blinks at her.

NEIL
What?

Nancy swings her feet over the edge of the bed, shaking herself awake, alert.

NANCY
I have to go see my father. I can still do that, right?

M

INT. HER FATHER'S CELL -- NIGHT.

CLOSE UP. NANCY'S FATHER.

Pale, brooding. At last he speaks.

JOHN
You can't afford to remain neutral any more, Nancy. He'll get you if you are -- you've been drawn into an even bigger fight than you were before.

SHOT WIDENS TO INCLUDE NANCY.

Nodding in agreement.

NANCY
I can see that. What I can't understand is the mechanism. I mean, what the fuck is going on?

He rubs his chin.

JOHN
I think, through Kirsten, you're literally experiencing the next

JOHN (CONTD)
generation of the fight. She can fight in ways you can't -- nothing against you -- it's just an evolutionary leap. Our mistake was thinking she was the only one. The others -- these kids wandering here from across the country -- they must all be warriors. For the final battle against Krueger.

NANCY
But what can I give them?

JOHN
They need you to lead, Nancy. You're the veteran -- you've fought him before. But you've got to move now, before he cuts you off at the pass.
(leans closer, softly)
Y'know?

Nancy looks up at him.

NANCY
But I can't even get to them now.

He leans back, smiles.

JOHN
I have an idea concerning that...

He pulls something from his trousers. A big, serious-looking key.

JOHN (CONTD)
Max's master key. Lifted it off him when he was in here the other day. Played catatonic, so he never suspected me. I bet he's sweating bricks right now, wondering where he left it.
(smiles)
You game?

Nancy grins.

NANCY
You know I am.

INT. CORRIDORS OF THE HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

In near total darkness, the two make their way through the labyrinth of the hospital's upper floors, keeping to the back ways, the little-used passageways. John's blindness makes it all the same to him, light or pitch dark.

NANCY
(whispered)
You planning on getting all of us out past the guards at the front gate?

JOHN
No way. That's where they look for attempted escapes. Besides, you kids've got better means at your disposal, don't you?

Nancy thinks. Realizes.

NANCY
I guess we do...

Next moment they arrive outside the back door leading into a familiar ward.

JOHN
There's where your army waits, baby. Bivouacked in confusion, demoralized, not even knowing they're waiting for their general.

They look in through the wire-grid window of the door.

IN THEIR POV -- we SEE --

An emergency group therapy session is taking place with Kirsten, Kincaid, Laredo, Taryn and Joey -- a very unsuccessful session, run by Neil and Doctor Maddalena.

INT. KIDS' WARD -- NIGHT.

NEIL PACES, darting from one kid to another --

NEIL
Come on, you guys -- you're all upset about something -- let's talk about some feelings, here -- let's get it out in the open!

But all the kids are freaked out completely. Semi-comatose, sleepless, scared and mute.

NEIL (CONTD)
Kincaid -- tell me what's going on!

KINCAID
Eat shit and die, headshrink.

MADDALENA
Taryn -- how about you -- can't you tell us what's going on with you kids?

Taryn shrugs off the question.

TARYN
Nothin you can get on your scope, that's for sure.

NEIL
Kirsten? What happened the other night?

Kirsten says nothing. Joey gives a twitch, rocking, chanting.

JOEY
Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my balls to keep,
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my eyes to take...

Maddalena stalks out, slamming the door behind her.

CLOSE ON NEIL, sitting, exhausted. Defeated, too.

Then he hears a DOOR UNLOCK and OPEN softly behind him.

Next second the bowed heads of the kids come up as one, their eyes turning in unison, their hunched shoulders straightening, all looking at --

NANCY and JOHN --

Moving into the room from the back entrance.

KINCAID
Awright!

NEIL jumps up, aghast. Kirsten runs to Nancy, holds her.

NEIL
Jesus! -- How the hell'd you guys get in here!

TARYN
I knew you'd come back.

LAREDO
Let the games begin!

NEIL
(to John)
Jesus -- you're not supposed to be out!

JOHN
You call this 'out'?

Neil licks his lips, scared. The kids are all up on their feet, circling, alert -- utterly opposite what they've been. All gathering around Nancy.

NEIL
I could call for help, Nancy...

Nancy touches his hand.

NANCY
You won't. I know you better than that.
(softer)
Just watch. Please. Just wait and watch.

Neil sighs, lost between duty and loyalty and love.

NEIL
What are you doing?

Without answering, Nancy lays down in the center of the floor. Instantly the kids join her. They form a 'star', heads in, arms extended, hands linked. Nancy motions for her father and Neil to join.

Her father does so. Neil balks.

NEIL
No... I... I don't know what the hell you're doing.

NANCY
Join us.

NEIL
You guys culting out on me?

He laughs nervously, shivers and steps back. Scared without knowing why.

And Nancy says only one word of instruction.

NANCY
Kirsten.

CLOSE ON KIRSTEN. The haggard girl looks to Nancy. Then accepts the order.

She closes her eyes.

A moment later she is breathing deeply and slow, plunging through her enormous fatigue into instant, deep sleep.

The kids look at Nancy. Neil looks at Nancy. Nancy's father looks at her, too.

NEIL
So? So she's asleep.

Suddenly, Nancy, her father and all the kids vanish. All together. In the twinkling of an eye.

Neil's eyes just about pop out of his head.

NEIL (CONTD)
Holy Shit!

N

EXT. HILLTOP -- NIGHT.

A towering hill caped by a star-filled sky. Far below we can see lights -- perhaps of the asylum. There is a vibrant, 'polarized' look to it all, as if it all is not quite real, or is in some sort of hyper reality far more acute than what we're used to experiencing.

Into this, our group, still holding hands in a circle, MATERIALIZES. Nancy, her father, Kirsten, Taryn, Joey, Kincaid and Laredo. They slowly drop each other's hands and look around, astonished, even ecstatic. And something is different about them

now. They have been subtly but profoundly transformed.

JOEY
Hey... I can talk!

Joey, twisted and spasmodic Joey, now stands tall, strong and graceful. He leaps and laughs and is whole. He takes a running jump into Kincaid's burly arms -- all laugh, joyous.

TARYN
(to Nancy)
Where are we?

LAREDO
(pointing to the distant lights below)
Isn't that the nut house?

KINCAID
(dumping Joey, who leaps away, laughing)
Weird. It feels like I've been waiting my whole fucking life to get here. But I ain't seen this place, never even knew it was here...

Nancy stands in front of them all, looking at them -- at the clear eyes, the straight bodies, the lack of any tics or furtive looks. These kids are now something completely different -- no longer fugitives or nut cases. They look much more like --

NANCY
Warriors.

The kids look at her, puzzled, curious. Nancy looks to her father -- he smiles, nods -- looks back to the kids.

NANCY (CONTD)
This place has been waiting for <u>you</u>.
For all of us.
(pacing before them, a diminutive Patton)
Five years ago I fought Freddie --
(to Kirsten and Kincaid)
The guy who nearly got you in the dream --

JOEY
(suddenly sobered)
You saying that's what drove us crazy, made us try to kill ourselves?

NANCY
(nods)
Except you didn't try to kill yourself, Joey. And neither did those other kids who died. It's Krueger -- that's how he works.

KIRSTEN
You mean Jennifer... and my friend Becky?

KINCAID
And Philip...?

KIRSTEN
But why don't we remember? I mean, if he tried to get us?

NANCY
I don't know -- maybe something he did to your memory -- maybe something your own minds did to save your sanity.

JOHN
Until you could know enough to sort it all out and deal with it. Until you knew who and what you really were.

The kids all turn and look at him, lost. But strangely excited, too.

JOHN (CONTD)
The point is, guys -- you all are survivors for a reason -- you all have a level of strength -- a skill that Freddie wasn't able to overcome. He killed as many of the others as he could, as fast as they showed up here -- but you got away.

TARYN
You saying we're all some kind of...

LAREDO
(smiling, realizing)
We <u>are</u> the Warriors.

NANCY
Dream Warriors. Sent by who or what I don't know, but sent to kill Krueger -- that much I <u>do</u> know.

JOHN
What made you misfits and fuckups in the 'real' world is what makes you a threat to him. Here is where you really come into your own. This is your home.

The Kids repeat 'We're home' to themselves, incantatory, a realization, almost religious.

NANCY
Now, if you don't want to fight, that's your right. You can leave right now -- I have no idea where you'll wake up.

KINCAID
Fuck that.

NANCY
But he'll never leave any of you alone if you run. He'll find you in your sleep, kill you in your dreams.

LAREDO
The only way is to take the fight to him. The Knights were called from every stifling corner. Until then they were outcasts. And then they were called. And then nothing else mattered.

JOEY
Can we kill him? Can he die?

NANCY
When I was just one, Freddie was invincible.
(looks at them all)
But when Kirsten and I fought him, we had a sliver of a chance. And with

NANCY (CONTD)
three of us -- Kincaid knocked him on his ass. Each of us together adds strength upon strength -- all of us together --

TARYN
(nods)
We'll be fucking unstoppable.

KINCAID
I'm in. I wanna kick that boy's ass real bad.

The rest of the kids ad lib "This is where we belong!" "Fuck Krueger!" etc.

NANCY
Okay. He isn't expecting this. Freddie likes his kids nice and passive. Well, we're gonna show him we're about as passive as a cluster bomb!

JOEY
Wow! It's like High Noon!

KINCAID
The Seven Fuckin' Samurai!

TARYN
We're gonna nail his ass!

LAREDO
The Dream Samurai!

JOHN
There's one more thing...
(all grow quiet)
If you can't kill him, there'll be no death for you. You'll be chased forever in a dream that doesn't end. That's what hell is.

All take this in but are not influenced.

KIRSTEN
How do we get there -- to the house?

With that, a DOOR appears -- in the middle of the air, in the

middle of the dakness. A DOOR with no structure around it.

The kids look at each other.

NANCY
I knew we'd dream something up.

EXT. ASYLUM -- NIGHT.

SEVERAL POLICE CARS are at the entrance of the hospital, their 360-degree lights flashing.

INT. THE UNIT -- NIGHT.

The Kid's ward. A few COPS are at the Nurse's Station -- one conferring with Maddalena and Neil.

COP
They couldn't have gotten far.
(gathers up dossiers)
We've got their descriptions and pictures -- they won't get a chance to hurt no one.

NEIL
I'm worried for their safety -- not for anyone else's -- these kids aren't going to hurt anybody.

The cop looks at Neil, his eyes flat.

COP
That's right, they aren't.
(back to Maddalena)
Any idea how the blind psycho managed to escape?

KINCAID
He stole a master key.

MADDELENA
He was helped by his daughter, of course.
(to Neil, icy)
You know the daughter, don't you, Doctor Guiness?

Neil returns the look, not flinching. But inside...

EXT. THE HILLSTOP -- NIGHT.

The Group stands awed, in formation, in front of the door. The door itself has grown in size now, and swings open, massive and imponderable. As soon as it does, a mass of ROARING FLAMES is REVEALED beyond its frame.

KINCAID
Uh-oh...

CLOSE-UPS.

Each one's face, the shadows and planes of light of the flames playing over them, the heat making them shine.

Kincaid goes warily to the door and stretches out his hand so that it is near the flames -- then pulls it back.

KINCAID
Motherfucker's hot!

TARYN
Because that's all you know about fire. It's a trick!
(braces)
Catch all you suckers later!

And with that she lets out a BANSHEE WAIL and sprints headlong into the door, vanishing in the roar of flames. The group gasps and waits.

Silence, as all wait, somehow, to see if her fater was as terrible as it looked or... Then, from inside the door --

TARYN
Get your asses down here, chicken-shits!

The remaining kids look at each other -- joining in a unity they have never shown before -- link hands and charge the door as one! They literally dive through, disappearing into the roaring flames.

Only Nancy and her father are left. She turns to him. He's perspiring. His eyes are empty sockets again.

NANCY
Your eyes...

JOHN
You know I can't go with you, Nancy.

NANCY
Daddy...

JOHN
I'm used up. He used me up! But I'll show the fucker!

NANCY
Daddy -- !

But too late -- John races for the doorway and flings himself into the flames. He arcs in -- and instantly there is the sound of a horrible, penetrating SCREAM -- a cry that spins away into infinity, far, far away.

NANCY -- cries out in loss --

NANCY (CONTD)
Daddy!

But there is no response from beyond the fire now. Nancy, slashing the tears away from her face with the back of her hand, turns with new resolve to the dor. And with a war-like scream she charges it.

NANCY (CONTD)
Kruuuu -- gerrrrrr!!!

She throws herself into the fire. And once she's gone, the door closes and then disintegrates into thin air. Only Krueger's name echoes through the cold night air.

Q

EXT. ASYLUM -- DAY.

Neil EXITS the facility, chased by Doctor Maddalena. There are COP CARS and POLICEMEN all over the place. A major escape from a mental institution amounts to something just this side of a coon hunt for these guys.

For Maddalena, it's a major embarassment.

MADDALENA
Doctor Guiness -- I want to know just what the hell went on in that room!

NEIL
So would I!
(spins on her)
I already told you what I know -- they just... disappeared, goddamit.

MADDALENA
Disappeared.

NEIL
Poof.

MADDALENA
Did you have anything to do with it?

NEIL
What the hell do you mean?

MADDALENA
You tell me -- I think you're in love with that girl -- and you're too damn blind to see that she used you!

NEIL
Fuck you very much, I'm going home.

MADDALENA
Don't you dare talk to me like...

She stops. Freezes at the sound of -- SCREAMING -- coming from a great distance -- but coming rapidly CLOSER. All the cops hear it too, and turn, staring as --

IN THEIR POV -- on the broad lawn of the institution -- the figure of Nancy's father MATERIALIZES -- blazing from head to foot -- running straight at them!

BACK TO NEIL.

NEIL
Oh my god.

Nancy's father collapses practically at Neil's feet. The Policemen run over and put out the flames with their jackets -- beating them away until there is just smoke and the charred man lying there.

NEIL (CONTD)
Get a gurney out here!

Doctor Maddalena is beside herself --

MADDALENA
He... must have set himself on fire...

JOHN
Neil...

Neil jerks around, realizing the man has called his name. He kneels at the man's side and leans down to him. And listens to the last words of this bedeviled man.

JOHN (CONTD)
Neil... they went into the dream. You've got to ... help them...

Neil draws back, frightened by the madness.

NEIL
I don't understand you! What dream? What can I do with a dream?

JOHN
Go... to the house. The house is the door. The house is the door to... dreams.

He dies.

Neil stands up, staggers back as the MEDICS arrive with the litter too late.

CLOSE ON NEIL. MUSIC.

INT. THE RANCH HOUSE (DREAM STATE) -- NIGHT.

The Kids are in the front room -- just inside the entrance. All intact, all hyper alert. Nancy sloshes gasoline along the wall, then orders them all to stand back -- and tosses in a match.

They all duck. But <u>nothing</u> happens. No fire. Nothing.

Nancy goes up and smells the gasoline.

NANCY
It's gas, all right. I don't get it.

She tries to light a curtain. No fire. Tries to light a chair. No dice.

LAREDO
You have to burn the Wizard himself. Nothing else will do.

They all turn and look a Laredo. Knowing, somehow, that he's right.

NANCY
(determined, going to Plan B)
Okay then...

CLOSE ON MOLOTOV COCKTAIL -- being topped off.

WIDER -- and we SEE that in each of their hands now is a gasoline bomb. Nancy finishes filling the last from the gasoline can, then lays out the new battle plan.

NANCY (CONTD)
Okay, what we're gonna do then is torch <u>him</u>. But we have to stay close -- we'll hunt him room to room, but always staying close together -- everybody understand that? Our strength is in numbers and <u>unity</u>!

KINCAID
We're gonna <u>hurt</u> this motherfucker!

MOVING WITH THEM AS THEY ADVANCE --

JOEY
Nancy -- do you think, if we get back okay, I'll be able to move like this? That my body'll be strong?

NANCY
I don't know, Joey. But you know, I wouldn't be surprised by anything at this point.

TARYN
Whataya mean <u>if</u> we get back okay?

That's no way to go into righteous battle! You got a strong body, well you better get yourself a strong attitude to go with it!

LAREDO
She's right! We're Knights, all of us, and the Terrible Moment is upon the Kindom of Hesh! Sleepers awake!

NANCY
Come on!

ANGLE AT THE STAIRS -- as all start up, Taryn the last in the group.

MOVING WITH HER.

As the others draw slightly away, she HEARS a VOICE -- and turns her head back. The others cannot hear it and continue upstiars without her.

VOICE (O.S.)
Sugar Baby?

Taryn turns back, recognizing the voice although it makes no sense...

TARYN
Gran-ma?

She backtracks into another room.

INT. A DEN.

Taryn ENTERS, looking around strangely. It's a musty room, scuzzy and threadbare; a tenement room that someone has tried to make homey.

Taryn sees a picture frame on the wall. She crosses to it.

PHOTO INSERT.

It's Taryn, in the arms of an old black woman, her GRANDMOTHER, staring out at the camera.

BACK TO TARYN.

She's puzzled.

VOICE
Sugar-baby?

She turns and sees an old rocking chair in the center of the room, its back to her. She slowly goes around it -- and finds herself looking into the old, kind eyes of her Grandmother, the woman in the picture. She is very old and very loving looking, sitting there rocking.

TARYN
Gran-ma!

She puts down her gasoline bomb, and throwing caution to the wind, rushes over and embraces the woman.

GRANDMOTHER
(stroking her)
I knew you'd come back to Grandma. Your Momma was so worried when you ran way. Why'd you run away, sugar-baby?

TARYN
I didn't run away, Grandma -- I just woke up one day, and I was in this other place. A hospital.

GRANDMOTHER
And what are you gonna do now?

TARYN
Stay here with you.

GRANDMOTHER
That's my sugar-baby. You put your head in my lap now.

Taryn nestles into the old woman's lap, peaceful, nurtured. Then, Freddie's foul voice booms from the old woman's throat.

FREDDIE/GRANDMOTHER
'Grandma' your black ass!

A huge maw erupts in the old woman's thorax -- splitting her dress open to reval rib-teeth, heart tongue, gut-gullet. The Grandmother now has Freddie's cackling head, and shove Taryn into the body-hole head first. We can HEAR Taryn's screams as she goes in, then hear muffled screams from within. Soon she is

halfway in, her torn jeans and black high-tops kicking furiously.

FREDDIE/GRANDMOTHER (CONTD)
The only problem with you, Taryn, is sometimes you're hard to stomach!

Then, with renewed vigor, Freddie pushes Taryn in like you'd help a sausage along into a grinder. When just a foot is left, an impatient Freddy whacks it off, tennis shoe and all and throws it into the hall.

INT. A BEDROOM.

Joey ENTERS -- carrying the gasoline can. He takes a quick look around the spartanly furnished room -- an ordinary bed with a drab spread, a chair, a chest of drawers -- then starts dousing the floor with gasoline.

JOEY
You crippled me, Krueger, but look at me now! Now I'm <u>your</u> nightmare!

He puts the can down, gets a match and prepares to leave the room before he starts the conflagration -- then he looks up again at the bed. It's different. The whole room is different. It's all pink, girlish -- frilly bedspread on a big four-poster, a pink telephone, stuffed animals, rock posters on the walls -- a typical teen-age girl's bedroom.

AND A BEAUTIFUL TEENAGE GIRL sits on the bed -- wearing the skimpiest of negligees.

TEENAGE GIRL
Hi, Joey.
(he's too stunned to say anything)
Don't you remember me? It's Beth. Beth Dorsett, from Hawthorne High.

JOEY
(looking closer, amazed)
I remember you. You used to laugh at me. The way I walked. You and your boyfriends.

TEENAGE GIRL
I've changed, Joey. And so have

TEENAGE GIRL (CONTD)
you. You're so handsome now, so sexy...
(she moves toward him)
Don't you like my body?
(she reveals her breasts)
I know you want me, Joey. Take me.

The bedroom door shuts -- Joey doesn't notice it. They embrace in a kiss. Joey seems to loosen up, enjoying it.

CLOSE UP.

Her tongue enters his mouth, a tongue that continues to grow from her mouth, snaking deeply as he gags, and her arms clamp around him like iron. We notice now that she is wearing Freddie's hat. Her tongue snakes out his right eye, popping it from its socket, then arcs around and dives right down into his other eye.

TEENAGE GIRL
You're such a good kisser, Joey!

Joey falls backwards, clutching his empty eye sockets, screaming, onto the four poster bed -- an ugly, sodden bed now graced with a bizarre red/green striped bedspread.

JOEY
Somebody help me, please God!

The four posts become animate and grab Joey, each one grabbing him by one of his arms and legs. They pull him tautly so that he is now stretched in mid-air above the bed. Freddie's head thrusts out of the headboard -- Freddy has become the bed -- as Joey's body stretches taut as a rubber band and then SNAPS in a spray of blood and shattered bone.

P

EXT. RANCH HOUSE -- NIGHT.

Neil's car screeches up and Neil jumps out.

CLOSE UP. NEIL.

He looks up at the house, curious, afraid, awed.

LOW ANGLE. HIS POV.

The house rises before him. MUSIC SWELLS.

NEIL
(low, to himself)
'For in that sleep of death, what dreams may come...'

He walks to the porch, passing the mobile.

CLOSE UP. THE MOBILE.

The chimes are HUMAN FINGERS. Pointing, pointing...

He knocks on the front door. It swings open, revealing the darkness within.

NEIL
Nancy?

INT. RANCH HOUSE -- NIGHT.

He ENTERS. Nothing. Empty. His mouth suddenly opens involuntarily in a yawn -- then won't close. He EXHALES a bluish fog. Then the fog disappears, and he closes his mouth again. He smiles, as if he's successfully made some kind of transition.

He SEES something O.C., walks out of FRAME.

CLOSE UP. SCISSORS.

They rest on a table in the entryway. He picks them up, sticks out an index finger and... SLICES IT OFF. He feels no pain. He picks up the finger and "puts it back on". And it's whole again. No blood, no sign of amputation.

NEIL
(thrilled; intoxicated)
My God, I'm in.
(beat)
I'm in the dreamworld.

Suddenly he hears a CRASHING from farther back in the house.

NEIL (CONTD)
Nancy? You back there?

Still no answer. He starts across the living room, almost tripping over the empty gasoline can there.

AT THE BACK OF THE LIVING ROOM -- as Neil goes through the door at its back, into greater darkness.

HALLWAY, DEEP INSIDE THE DREAM RANCH HOUSE --

MOVING WITH NANCY -- calling --

NANCY
Taryn? Joey?

No answer for her, either.

She turns, sensing something. Calls a different name --

NANCY (CONTD)
FREDDIE? I'M BACK, YOU SON OF A BITCH!

No sound. Then, Freddie steps out behind her. Silent and intent as a big, evil cat. Lifting his bladed glove.

FREDDIE
Eat this, Nancy...

Nancy turns, sees him -- and throws her gasoline bomb right at his head.

NANCY
Eat this!

Freddie ducks -- bomb ignites the whole wall in front of him -- and Nancy runs like hell!

ANOTHER ROOM -- LESS ASKEW --

In a darkened room, Neil hears the explosion. Hears the yells, too -- and then sees smoke, farther back in there -- farther than he'd have guessed the house went.

He races back in -- yelling --

NEIL
Nancy?

ANGLE AT A CORNER -- as Neil crashes straight into -- Nancy -- the two crashing together.

Nancy jumps up -- terrified for him --

NANCY
What the hell are you doing here?

NEIL
Your father sent me -- he's...

Nancy guesses it, sagging.

NANCY
(fighting back tears)
Neil, you shouldn't be here!
It's dangerous -- and I've got work
that's gotta be done now!

Neil, laughs -- a little crazy himself --

NEIL
Are you kidding? I'm physically
inside a reality I've been trying
to penetrate clinically for years.
Do you think I'd miss this chance?

He moves forward -- Nancy and he separated only by a gauze of smoke -- the young woman more and more afraid --

NANCY
Neil, get out -- please! This
isn't goddam research! You're
in deep shit!

NEIL
Come here... let me hold you.
Don't you see, I love it! it's
what I've always theorized... it's
kind of like -- it's like tele-
vision or something...

NANCY
Yeah? Well, believe me, what
you're about to see, you'd rather
be watching on television!

NEIL
It's okay. Whatever it is, I can
handle it.

The words are just out of his mouth when Freddie lunges out of nowhere --

FREDDIE
Is there a doctor in the house?

NEIL
(paralyzed)
Holy shit!

NANCY
Come on!

Nancy leaps through the veil of smoke and grabs Neil -- and the two fall backwards -- narrowly missed by Freddie, and running down the hall, Neil looking frantically back over his shoulder at the gaining demon. Nancy grabs Neil -- running with him as Freddie is distracted by -- the fire building.

Sidetracked -- Freddie employs an extraordinary dream device -- and puts the fire out -- vomiting a stream of water straight out of his mouth -- onto the fire, putting it out.

MOVING WITH NEIL AND NANCY -- stumbling/running through a cockeyed-reality of a corridor, Neil crying out --

NEIL
Let's get the hell out of here!

NANCY
Your dream or mine, hotshot?!

He doesn't know the answer to that one -- all he knows is that Freddie is coming after them again -- and they run once more.

NEIL
Who is that guy, anyway?

NANCY
We gotta find the other kids before it's too late!

MOVING WITH LAREDO --

He holds a torch high in one hand, a SABRE out of a Dungeon and Dragons scenario in the other. He looks like a thin pirate.

He moves down a wet, stony set of stairs, down into the basement of the house.

Then, just as he reaches the bottom of the stairs, he hears a little voice calling his name.

He twists around, and sees a SEVEN YEAR OLD BOY come from the shadows. Dripping wet, in a swim suit. (A green swim suit with a red stripe.)

Laredo is stunned

TOBY
Hi, Laredo! Don't you recognize me? I'm Toby. Your brother.

Laredo recoils back into the darkness.

LAREDO
(fighting not to be overcome)
You're not my brother! You're not real!

TOBY
I was swimming in the pool. Mommy told you to watch me . But you had to talk on the phone.

LAREDO
No! It was a wrong number, I couldn't have been on for more than a second!

TOBY
A second was all I needed to die, Laredo.

The little boy and Laredo are now inches away from each other.

TOBY (CONTD)
Laredo, save me! If you'll just hold me, I'll be all right. It's a second chance -- for both of us!

Laredo reaches out. And just as we feel Freddie is going to strike, Laredo strikes first -- kicking the 'little boy' hard, right in the nuts! Instantly Freddie roars back with an unholy bellow -- lurching back out of the little boy's shape and crashing into a wall.

Laredo laughs and screams at him

LAREDO
You didn't think I'd fall for that, did you Krueger?
(more to himself, amused)
Shape-changing -- I can get into that.
(then realizing)
I bet I <u>can</u> get into that...

And with that Laredo changes shape into a ferocious gargoyle of a thing, ten feet high, with long fangs and yellow cat's eyes!

Freddie jumps back in shock as the thing hisses and strikes at him -- and then, just as suddenly, Freddie changes into a ragged-ass black crow that flaps easy out of reach, circling the monster and pecking at its eyes!

The Laredo/Gargoyle snaps suddenly into the shape of a huge red net, swinging through the air, swooping around the Freddie/Crow and caturing it easily.

But no sooner does this happen than the Freddie/Crow changes shape into a RUSHING BLOB OF GOO that easily squishes out between the interstices of the net, gathers on the floor and reforms right back into Freddie -- who ducks behind a doorway -- just as the net returns to the shape of Laredo -- who looks around cockily for Freddie --

LAREDO
Guess that showed him!

Next second Freddie roars out of the doorway with a gas-powered post hole digger -- driving the giant screw straight into the back of Laredo! The whirling bit drills straight through the startled boy -- spinning out his chest!

FREDDIE
Screw you!

LAREDO
Aaiiiiiiiiiii!!!!

Laredo twists into a screaming cloud of bloody vapor -- human-shaped -- human screaming -- shooting right down the corridor and into --

Q

THE ROOM WITH NANCY AND NEIL --

As the the bloody apparition of Laredo comes screaming through the air, coming down the hall like a dripping rocket -- bansheeing right past them and out into oblivion.

NANCY
No!

Nancy turns and runs with Neil -- flinging open the first door -- and the corpse of Joey -- horribly dismembered -- snaps out at

her like some gory rubber band --

She and Neil scream and run the opposite direction -- tripping over the dangling, blood-oozing tennis shoe of Taryn --

They twist another direction, running around a corner -- crashing straight into what's left of Taryn herself -- now nothing more than a lurching mound of guts and terror.

Nancy and Neil reel back, terrified -- running in pure panic now -- throwing open the last door -- crashing straight into --

KIRSTEN AND KINCAID --

Alive and just as startled --

And all four scream in terror. Then recover just enough to confirm --

KINCAID
The others? Where are they?

NANCY
Dead.

Next moment Freddie lunges out at them -- sweeping at them with his gleaming claws --

Pissed -- Kincaid clears his throat with lightning speed and spits a giant clam smack into Freddie's eye!

Freddie, grossed out, staggers backwards -- and Kincaid kicks him in the stomach -- sending him cartwheeling backwards down the hall in a dark ball like a stricken spider. He hits the far end, but by god, he starts to get up again. The guy is hurt, but tough!

Nancy takes the opportunity to marshall their effort

NANCY
All your bombs -- come on, we gotta burn the fucker!

And with that all unleash their firebombs at Freddie. The hall erupts into a firestorm -- a firestorm that hides Freddie -- and drives them back with surprising heat.

They retreat, suddenly realizing they've set fire to the very place they inhabit! They back up, running before the fire -- until they're trapped against a wall with no doors.

Trapped with the fire advancing. The heat increasing by the second.

Nancy grabs Kirsten

NANCY
Kirsten -- it's up to you! You pulled us in, you can pull us out!

Kirsten is terrified --

KIRSTEN
But how -- where?

Nancy nails her with her eyes --

NANCY
Think of some place you know -- the most familiar place you can -- and get us there -- fast!

Kirsten, not even knowing quite what she's doing, concentrates for all she's worth. The fire leaps closer, but the second before it sweeps over them, they all vanish!

R

EXT. KIRSTEN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT.

The driveway is choked with expensive cars. VALET PARKERS. We HEAR PARTY SOUNDS from within.

INT. KIRSTEN'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT.

Kirsten's mother, MRS. PARKER, is on the phone. In the B.G. we can SEE PARTY GUESTS, WAITERS, circulating with drinks and hors d'oeuvres. CATERERS busy themselves as she talks.

MRS PARKER
(into phone; testy)
Yes, Doctor Maddalena, I under stand there's been some sort of breakout, but no, I haven't seen Kirsten and I don't have time to help you look for her now -- I've got guests. And even if she shows up, she's not setting one foot inside this

MRS PARKER (CONTD)
house!
(more pointedly)
Besides, it's not my responsi-
bility -- it's yours... Now,
if you'll excuse me --

She hangs up. We FOLLOW HER to --

LIVING ROOM.

The party continues. An instant later, Kirsten, Nancy, Neil and Kincaid bomb out of thin air and CRASH onto the center table, shattering it. Food, drink and broken dishes fly everywhere. Guests scream and scatter.

The gang of Dream Adventurers climbs off the table, looking around, dazed, almost as surprised at the mother.

Kirsten's father, MR PARKER, grabs her arm.

MR PARKER
Just what the hell do you think
you're doing, young lady?

Mrs Parker staggers back up, furious --

KIRSTEN
Let go of me!

MRS PARKER
(to Neil)
And you! You're going to lose
your license over this! I'm
calling the police.

Neil ignores her, turning to Nancy. She's gone white.

NEIL
What is it?

NANCY
It's Krueger... He... he's here.
He --

She never gets a chance to finish -- next instant Freddie ERUPTS from the floor, volcanic, enraged, a dream bull in a reality china shop! He lunges, missing Kirsten by an inch -- but slashing right into the mother!

The stricken woman crashes backwards into the screaming guests --

looking down in horror at her own guts ballooning up through the wound, staring at them as if they belong to someone else. Then Freddie buries his head in them, tearing them from her in thick strings like a mad vulture. She screams horribly as her bowels are devoured.

Then he lurches up and leers at Kirsten.

FREDDIE
Next!

Kirsten and her shocked troops turns and runs -- and the chase is on -- out of the room and into --

INT. DEN/TROPHY-GUN ROOM -- NIGHT.

Kirsten leads them into her father's den -- a rich man's game room -- full of trophy heads and guns!

Kirsten, near hysteria, still manages to keep her wits enough to remember her fathers hidden cache. She races to a hidden panel, finds the trick switch -- and the panel swings open to reveal --

KINCAID
A fuckin' AR 14! -- awright!'

NEIL
Here's the clip!

Next second the door into the place takes a direct hit from Freddie -- his claws shredding it in one swoop, right through the wood. Kincaid wheels around, jams in the clip and fires!

A tremendous volley -- the door explodes into a blizzard of wood chips!

OUTSIDE THE DOOR -- Freddie is sent flying into a wall -- spewing blood from a score of holes --

DEN/TROPHY ROOM.

Kincaid hollers triumphantly as the others pat him on the back.

OUTSIDE THE DOOR -- Freddie staggers back up -- madder than ever!

FREDDIE
Your asshole belongs to me, Kincaid!

He assails the door again, surviving Party Guests scattering in all directions in b.g.

INSIDE THE DEN --

The gun is empty -- Kincaid flings it aside -- going for others. But these more tame game rifles are also all empty.

KINCAID
Where's the ammo!

KIRSTEN
I don't know!

And Freddie is coming through the door! Suddenly Neil grabs Nancy's hand --

NEIL
(ordering)
Link hands, everybody!

KINCAID
No time for bullshit, Doc!

NEIL
I said shut up and link hands!
(all holding hands now)
Kirsten, I'm thinking of a place, a familiar place. Can you see it?!

Kirsten scrunches up her face in concentration as Freddie claws through the last of the door --

NEIL (CONTD)
Can you see it, Kirsten?

KIRSTEN
I don't know... It's hard... I'm scared ---

The door breaks down compleately. As Freddie screams towards them -- something SNAPS audibly in the air and our four heroes VANISH.

Freddie crashes right through the place they were -- clawing the air in obscene frustration.

INT. ASYLUM CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Doctor Maddelena is there, rushing along making sure all doors are locked when suddenly Neil, Kirsten and Nancy tumble out of a wall not five feet from her!

Maddelena wheels around in surprise, seeing the four.

Meanwhile Neil, Kirsten and Nancy turn at Kincaid's cries.

KINCAID
Help! Oh, shit -- help!

They're shocked by a grotesque sight -- their friend is stuck halfway through the wall, his other half -- back at Kirsten's with Freddie -- halfway between freedom and hell.

KINCAID
He's coming -- get me out!
Pull me out -- Please! Hurry!

They grab his arms --

NANCY
Kirsten, concentrate! Pull him in!

KIRSTEN
(trying hard)
I can't... Something's blocking me.
I can't!

NEIL
(to Maddalena)
Help us, for godsakes!

A startled Maddelena joins them, all tugging the hapless Kincaid with all their strength -- the boy screaming --

KINCAID
He's got my legs! Oh God...
he's... he's going in me, with
his hand! He's going inside me!
Oh Godddddddd!

And then the razor claws, which entered Kincaid in one world, now emerge from his mouth like a curious metal insect. The others back off instinctively -- Kincaid is dead.

The claws retract. All watch in horror as Kincaid's motionless torso slides down the wall like a snail, then, when it reaches the floor, topple away from the wall, neatly sheared.

The women SCREAM as Freddie's head and shoulders appear, jutting out of the wall, sweeping at them with a shriek of triumph. His mouth suddenly becomes a crocodile-sized maw -- biting off Maddalena's head at the shoulders. Neil, Nancy and Kirsten run in terror. And Freddie streaks after them!

NEIL
Jesus Christ -- are we in a nightmare or are we awake!?

NANCY
No difference now!

They streak through a metal door, and Kirsten wheels and slams it hard -- catching Freddie full in the face! Freddie crashes down -- and the three race off --

STAIRS --

-- down the only escape route they find open to them -- down a long flight of concrete utility stairs -- Down, down, down, Freddie racing after them, his claws scraping hideously on the steel rails.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS -- in deep shadows now, they brake at a door. It's wooden, small, weathered.

INSIDE --

They burst through, finding themselves in

INT. RANCH HOUSE BASEMENT.

NANCY
Oh my god, we're back in his ranch house!

They slam the door behind them -- Freddie's claws instantly ripping into it from the other side.

They race up a short flight of wooden steps -- but one small opening of the door reveals -- the whole upper house a sea of flames!

They run back down -- and Freddie is coming through the wooden door from the hospital stairs.

Neil, playing his last macho card, races halfway across the cellar.

NEIL
(to girls)
I have a theory.
(turns to Krueger)
This is my dream, you ugly son of a bitch -- and nobody comes in without my permission! Understand? Get out of my dream!

Freddie pulls up, surprised at first. Then amused, a nasty smile cracking his face.

FREDDIE
I don't want you, faggot. Fuck off and die!

Then, fast as a snake's strike -- his arm shoots out, extending out across the distance with lightning speed -- (at least fifteen feet) -- the fist on its end striking Neil full in the face -- knocking him out cold!

Freddie moves right past him -- eyeing the girls, gesturing with his steel claws for them to come to him

FREDDIE
C'mere, cunts.

The girls fall back -- trapped -- backing up against a coal bin -- both losing their balance at the same time -- falling backwards together into a long chute!

THE CHUTE.

They slide and fall down, down the chute -- plunging out into --

5

INT. THE ORIGINAL BOILER ROOM

The girls fly out of the chute ass over teakettle and fall into a mass of filthy clothing -- finding themselves smack dab in the middle of Freddie's original lair!

They stagger up, shaken, looking around.

NANCY
This is the place he took his kids... where everything started...

The words are hardly out of her mouth before Freddie leaps out

from behind one of the surging boilers, bathed in the red light of its flames.

FREDDIE
Welcome home, Nancy.
(wiggles the steel at Kirsten)
You, too, juicy little bitch.

And he comes for them. Closer and closer. Kirsten grabbing a length of pipe, desperate for any sort of weapon. Freddie merely knocks the pipe away. Advances again.

He's right on top of them when Nancy suddenly remembers. She slaps her forehead --

NANCY
Jesus -- this isn't the way to kill Freddie -- !

And she grabs Kirsten -- turning her 180 degrees away from Freddie.

KIRSTEN
What are you doing?

NANCY
You've got to turn your back on him -- take his energy away!

And indeed, as the girls concentrate -- we see Freddie recoil -- afraid for the first time.

NANCY
(chanting)
Take it away, all of it away from him!

And Freddie begins to smoke --

NANCY (CONTD)
He's shit -- he's nothing!

And Freddie, with a great cry, bursts into flames! He careens around the room and falls in a burning heap, the flames surging up in a tremendous conflagration.

The girls take cover behind a boiler from the heat, until the flames go down and the room darkens somewhat.

Fearful, the girls stay behind the boiler, listening for any sound.

Nothing. All strangely quiet. Then; we HEAR something.

Nancy stiffens, dips and snatches up a jagged shard of steel -- a piece of Freddie's glove's original fabrication -- the girl instantly afraid again.

But then there's a voice.

VOICE (O.S.)
Nancy?

But the voice is not Freddie's. It's another voice entirely, familiar and warm. And Nancy straightens and looks. Sees her father standing out from the smoke, a shadowy but real figure.

NANCY
Daddy?

He grins, blackened by soot but alive.

JOHN
Baby.

He opens his arms for her. She takes a closer look... He steps a bit out of the smoke, closer to her. It's really him. And the two move to each other, the jagged steel blade almost falling from Nancy's hand. The two reach out -- lovingly, longingly -- and then -- almost at the same instant -- Nancy plunges the steel blade deep into the man's chest -- as the man snaps upward with the steel-bladed glove he's kept so well hidden till now. And both jolt together in a death dance as Kirsten screams and Nancy reaches up and pulls at the face -- the skin pulling away to reveal FREDDIE.

They collapse together, Freddie screaming a terrible cry of mortal injury, already beginning to dissolve and break apart. Kirsten races in, snatching Nancy out of this horrible embrace, pulling, dragging her away, cradling her at last in her arms.

Kirsten looks over her shoulder, still terrified, at what was Freddie.

KIRSTEN
I don't know if he's dead!

NANCY
(knowing it)
He's dying -- his house is burning, and I am dying. All his energy is going... I can feel it.

She sags back against Kirsten's breast. Kirsten shakes her gently, tears brimming --

Nancy moves her mouth as if she has something important to say but is too weak to talk. Kirsten leans over and listens, intently. We can't hear the words, but Kirten nods fiercely.

KIRSTEN
I'll do it, Nancy. You can count on me.
(Nancy smiles wanly)
But I won't let you die, I won't!
(lower, with strange intensity)
I'm going to dream you...
(whispering in Nancy's ear)
I'm going to dream you into a beautiful dream forever... forever...

And she holds her tight, closes her eyes. And Nancy, closing her eyes in great peace, fades away into nothing. Kirsten's arms surround nothing but air.

A moment later Freddie is nothing more than a heap of ashes blowing across the boiler room floor. Only one thing is left: a charred glove, and four gleaming blades.

Kirsten gathers them up in a torn rag and pockets them.

INT. HOUSE'S BASEMENT.

Kirsten ENTERS the smoking place and grabs the unconscious Neil, dragging him across the floor to the stairs by the wall. These are the stairs leading to a double cellar storm door. She flings them open, revealing a cool, star-spangled night and trees, ablaze with the light of the burning house.

The cool night air rushes in. She starts dragging Neil up the stairs.

EXT. THE RANCH HOUSE -- NIGHT.

WIDE ANGLE on the two staggering away from the burning house -- an inferno now. When she's got him at a safe distance, she lets him go, laying him on the ground. Then she turns to look at the house.

CLOSE UP. KIRSTEN.

Staring at the house with startling intensity.

RANCH HOUSE.

The flames become 'phantom flames' as the house itself seems to become newer, cleaner, younger... until it is the same house we saw at the beginning of the film in the fast zoom back from the terrible infant ripping its mother.

Kirsten stands now, confident, possessed -- and walks slowly toward the house. A WOMAN'S SCREAMS and in inhuman INFANT'S WAIL grow louder as she gets closer.

INT. RANCH HOUSE (PERIOD, FRESH) -- NIGHT.

Kirsten ENTERS the house -- and we see the familiar living room. But now it is furnished with pieces from the Forties. An old radio blares a Forties tune that mingles sickly with the horrid SCREAMS of the woman.

Then the SCREAMS are cut off by what can only be heard as the woman's death.

The house is horribly quiet.

Kirsten starts up the stairs, her face cold, determined.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY.

Kirsten takes out the dirty rag, empties the sooty, still-gleaming blades into her hands. Then she folds the rag around their ends, making a knife.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT.

Kirsten ENTERS. The WOMAN lays beneath the bloody sheets. Her hair flung over her white, motionless face. She's dead.

Kirten walks slowly to the bed, lifting the razored knife in one hand, her other hand moving slowly to the sheet to pull it back.

She does... slowly... but there's only a deep pool of blood.

Tiny bubbles rise in the pool. Her fingertips move to touch its surface... slowly, cautiously. Just as she does, a TINY RAZOR-CLAWED HAND grabs her wrist with a terrific MUSIC STING.

WIDER -- as it tries to pull her into the bed. Kirsten screams, resisting, pulling back, tugging the horrid little thing out of the pool.

LOW ANGLE -- as she raises it out with the strength of sheer determination -- and we SEE the infant FREDDIE KRUEGER -- fesh from the womb, fresh from matricide, its life of horror stretching out before it.

It looks old and wizened, even as a baby, strange, monstrous, grotesque. It clutches Kirsten as she takes it and slams it against a wall, trying to hammer the life out of it! It screams -- but is it crying or laughing? -- and her efforts seem to have little effect. Finally, it lets go of her and she STABS it, impaling it with the blades -- the blades it will never grow up to make.

That done, Kirsten backs away, quaking with her effort, crying...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RANCH HOUSE -- DAWN.

Neil and Kirsten lay in each others' arms in front of the still-smoldering ranch house. Ashes now. They've won.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEIL'S HOUSE -- DUSK

The season has changed. The house is weathered but still kept up. Next to Neil's car is a Rabbit with New York plates.

INT. NEIL'S HOUSE/DINING ROOM -- DUSK.

Kirsten and Neil have finished a meal together and are drinking wine. Kirsten's hair is shorter; Neil looks thinner, a little weary.

NEIL
So Catholic school didn't turn out to be so bad after all.

KIRSTEN
I went at first because Daddy wanted me to... And 'cause of Mom and everything. It's actually turned out to be kind of what I needed. And Upstate is so beautiful.

NEIL
Yes, it is.

She sips her wine. An awkward silence.

KIRSTEN
Are... you still on sabbatical?

NEIL
Yeah. Well, it was great seeing you. I'm glad you dropped by.

KIRSTEN
Is that a hint?

NEIL
I'm just a little tired tonight.

She takes a little breath, then decides to ask the question.

KIRSTEN
Do you two still... see each other?

Neil tries to keep a straight face, but then a little smile escapes his eyes.

NEIL
Yeah, we do. In fact, I'm seeing her tonight. That's why I'm in such a rush to get to sleep.

Kirsten nods. She knew it.

KIRSTEN
Will you say hi?
(he smiles that he will)
Well, g'night.

NEIL
Good night.

She hesitates by the door, seeing something O.C. She smiles.

KIRSTEN
Isn't that Joey's?

ANGLE ON JOEY'S MODEL -- the exact model of Freddie's house that we saw Joey building earlier in his room at the hospital.

NEIL
(nods)
They were going to throw it away.
I rescued it. A souvenir.

Kirsten smiles again.

KIRSTEN
Bye.

She EXITS. Neil watches her go, then turns off the lights and goes upstairs.

PAN TO THE MODEL IN THE DARKNESS. Dark itself. Covert. We HOLD ON IT a long while. Then -- in one of its tiny windows, a light blinks on. And we HEAR the SCRAPE of STEEL AGAINST STEEL.

FADE TO BLACK

ROLL END CREDITS.